



I DISCOVER GREECE



HARRY A. FRANCK



BULGARIA



The
PRINCE of VAGABONDS
in
THE LAND OF
ULYSSES



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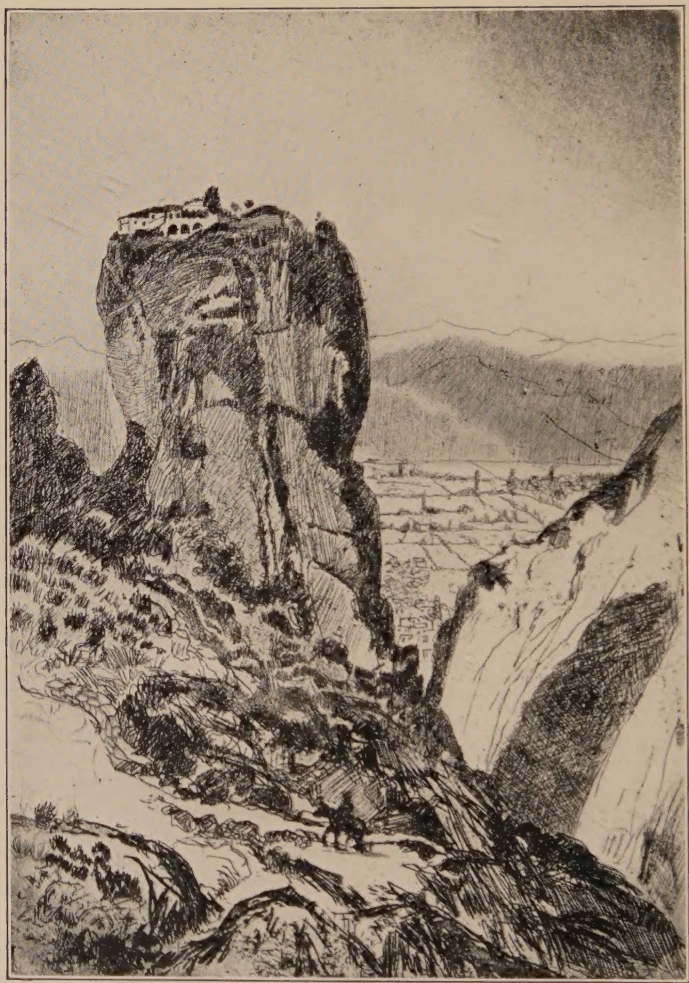
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I DISCOVER GREECE

*A chronological list
of MR. FRANCK'S travel books*

A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD
FOUR MONTHS AFOOT IN SPAIN
TRAMPING THROUGH MEXICO, GUATEMALA
AND HONDURAS
ZONE POLICEMAN 88
VAGABONDING DOWN THE ANDES
WORKING NORTH FROM PATAGONIA
VAGABONDING THROUGH CHANGING GERMANY
ROAMING THROUGH THE WEST INDIES
GLIMPSES OF JAPAN AND FORMOSA
WANDERING IN NORTHERN CHINA
ROVING THROUGH SOUTHERN CHINA
EAST OF SIAM (FRENCH INDO-CHINA)
THE FRINGE OF THE MOSLEM WORLD
I DISCOVER GREECE



A Hanging Monastery

From an etching by George H. Shorey

I DISCOVER GREECE

*Wherein an Incurable Nomad Sets Forth
What Befell Him and an Artist Friend
During a Labyrinthine Summer Journey
Through Modern Hellas*

BY

HARRY A. FRANCK

*Ninety-seven Illustrations from Photographs by the Author
and a Frontispiece by His Companion*



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TO
GEORGE HEAYSMAN SHOREY
MY SPARTAN FELLOW-SUFFERER
ON THIS ENTHRALLING BUT
UNSEASONABLE JOURNEY

PRE-AMBLE

Somehow, in all my previous wanderings I happened never to have set foot upon the territory which to-day constitutes the Republic of Greece. Perhaps it was just as well. For by putting off my Grecian adventure, I was able to have a congenial companion. Twenty years ago, when we were both adorning the faculty of a private school in New York City, that well-known (though not so much so as he deserves) artist, Mr. George H. Shorey, and I planned a summer in Greece together. Some unkind decree of Fate forced us to postpone the trip—and the years rolled on. In a way that, too, was fortunate; for we found a much larger and quite a different Greece from the one we should have seen earlier in the century.

Summer is not the ideal season for traveling in Greece, as the sympathetic reader will in due time become aware. But as Mr. Shorey continues to this day to instruct young millionaires and their social understudies in the various branches of his art, we had no choice as to the time of year when we could travel together. As a result, my own choice of title, prudishly frowned upon by my decorous publishers, would have been that suggested by a wife not at all given to such language, "Hot as Hellas!"

If there be those who consider presumptive the title finally chosen, let me plead in extenuation that not only was this a journey of discovery so far as I am personally concerned, but that many others have lost track of the once

well-known people who had been for two thousand years subjects of the Macedonians, Romans, Venetians, and Turks when, in 1821, Prince Alexander Ypsilanti began the revolt which resulted, just a hundred years ago, in making Greece once more an independent nation. Much as we know, or may have known at the end of our school-days, of the Greeks in their heyday, most of us are just beginning to discover modern Greece.

Incredible as it may sound, the companionship of the artist more than compensated for the seasonal drawbacks. Moreover, these gave me an opportunity for which I had long been waiting. For it was none other than the artist himself who first effectively encouraged me to cast aside the eminently respectable calling he still pursues, during school hours, for the vagrant and disreputable one I now more or less diligently follow. The discerning bibliophile who clings with us to the bitter end must admit that for these soft-hearted times the punishment inflicted upon him came reasonably near to fitting his crime.

The artist brought with him, whatever else he forgot, a fresh supply of that boyish enthusiasm to be envied in the hitherto untraveled, which alone made him more useful than any Baedeker and more than offset any nurse-maiding his lack of previous experience abroad made necessary. For to the much-traveled the problem becomes more and more how to stir oneself up to that youthful ardor without which any job is a drab and tiresome occupation and the result of minor consequence, if not indeed a complete waste of time. The more one travels, the less one sees, in a certain sense. Or rather, the more one sees, tastes, smells, experiences, the less keen become the reactive emotions. The mind is like a slate, from which past pictures can never be completely obliterated, with the result that new impressions be-

come less and less clearly recorded, more and more mixed with those that have gone before. While it is true that the blasé but sharp-eyed old-timer will often catch things which might escape entirely the inexperienced traveler, it is a great advantage to have along a fresh mind, be it that of a youngster in years or some one so untraveled that he still has the juvenile mind without the downy cheeks.

The illustrations are, as usual, from my own snap-shots, except for a few taken by the artist. I might perhaps in some cases have bought better pictures than I succeeded in shooting or filching. But thanks to some queer kink in my make-up, that has always seemed to me very much like plagiarizing, or at least as reprehensible as gathering facts in a library instead of on the ground. On the other hand, I have ruthlessly cribbed all the artist's opinions, prejudices, wise-cracks, and words of wisdom, so that any virtue which may be discovered in this volume should be credited to him.

HARRY A. FRANCK

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I IN THE WAKE OF THE CRUSADERS . . .	3
II CYPRUS UNDER BRITISH RULE	16
III TRAMPING IN OX-GAITED CYPRUS . . .	33
IV OVER THE TOP	44
V GRECIAN THRACE	57
VI REPATRIATED SALONIKA	70
VII ACROSS THESSALY TO THE HANGING MON- ASTERIES	81
VIII BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES	93
IX ON TO ATTICA, WITH A NIGHT IN THEBES	110
X MODERN ATHENS	123
XI REMINDERS OF THE PAST	136
XII PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT	147
XIII REPUBLICAN HELLAS	159
XIV THE GREEK AT HOME	169
XV APPRAISING THE MODERN HELLENE . .	186
XVI SAILING THE ÆGEAN	201
XVII AMONG THE CYCLADES	215
XVIII WITHIN GUN-SHOT OF TURKEY . . .	226
XIX TOURING MYTILENE	238

CHAPTER	PAGE
XX A LAND WITHOUT WOMEN	247
XXI ADVENTURES IN AGHION OROS	259
XXII MEANDERING THE PELOPONNESUS . . .	275
XXIII DOWN TO SPARTA	286
XXIV OVER THE TAYGETOS TO MESSENIAS . . .	298
XXV WITH A HALT AT OLYMPIA	307
XXVI WESTWARD TO CORFU	316
XXVII ABOUT THE BAY OF CORINTH	324
XXVIII CLIMBING PARNASSUS	335
XXIX A LONELY JOURNEY TO CRETE	347

ILLUSTRATIONS

A Hanging Monastery	<i>Frontispiece</i>
<i>From an etching by George H. Shorey</i>	
	FACING PAGE
Famagusta, "A Seaport in Cyprus"	16
Looking across Famagusta, whose Venetian cathedral is now topped by a minaret	17
The water-men of Nicosia deliver the elixir of life from door to door	17
One of the many reasons why automobilists do little speeding on the highways of Cyprus	32
Strange plow-fellows are to be seen among the hills . . .	32
A peasant woman of Cyprus	33
No wonder the men of Cyprus live to a ripe old age . . .	33
A street of Nicosia, hampered by the tomb of a Mohammedan holy man	48
A lace-maker of Lefkara	48
Rare is the woman of Lefkara who is not a lace-maker . .	49
The author about to be shoved off into space in an asbestos-mine bucket	49
In the tobacco fields of Thrace	64
Sorting tobacco in a Xanthi "factory"	65
Unloading Thracian tobacco in Xanthi	65
Itinerant photographers embellish every city of Greece . .	68
The hilltop at Salonika is crowned by an ancient fortress-wall .	68
A refugee's pottery shop in Salonika	69
A cross-section of Salonika, second city of the new Greece .	76
Moving day in Salonika, with a Jewish hamal as moving-van .	77
A familiar sight anywhere in Greece	77
Looking down upon Kalabaka from the trail to the "hanging" monasteries	84

	FACING PAGE
A stairway cut in the solid rock has superseded the hoisting apparatus at Aghia Triada	85
The aerial veranda at Meteora overlooks magnificent scenery	100
The age-beautified chapel at Meteora is a subject for the painter rather than the photographer	100
Only a Greek could endure the old-fashioned costume during a Grecian summer	101
Once he worked in the cotton-mills of Lowell, Massachusetts .	101
The crude, dirt-cheap, beautiful pottery of Greece enthralled my artist-companion	112
In Greece rush-bottomed chairs are more numerous than human beings	113
More or less of the old Balkan costumes remain in many parts of republican Greece	113
The Acropolis of Athens from the Stadium	128
The Temple of Theseus is one of the best preserved of the many ancient monuments in Athens	129
A pillar of the Temple of Zeus lies like a stack of poker chips where washout and wind tumbled it long ago	129
The artist reaches at last one of the chief goals of his dreams	144
The Parthenon is being leisurely restored	144
The Acropolis from the Temple of Theseus	145
Lykabettos rises like a rocky island in the midst of modern Athens	160
The sellers of lottery tickets add to the general din of Grecian cities	161
The president's body-guard wears an old Greek costume . .	161
The little Byzantine church of Panagia Gargoepikos hides behind the huge but commonplace "Metropolitan" of Athens . .	164
The interiors of Greek churches, gaudy with ikons, are everywhere much alike	164
My companion did not give all the sculptors of ancient Greece hundred-percent marks in modeling	165
The Nike of Olympia has completely lost face	165

	FACING PAGE
The Greek boot-black at home sits while his customer stands	172
Even in Greece the high cost of living provokes argument	173
Peasant weddings include twenty-four hours of what the celebrants fondly mistake for dancing	173
Centuries of water-seekers have worn deep grooves in the stone curbing of many a Grecian well	192
Greek churches contain many such testimonials that Christian martyrs took their martyrdom calmly	192
By August the currant-grapes of Greece are ready for harvesting	193
Many a Greek peasant might almost be mistaken for a ballet-dancer	193
Hermopolis, the capital of the little island of Syra, is a sight not soon forgotten	208
This section of Hermopolis, once Venetian, is still Catholic	209
Looking down upon the Greek Orthodox part of Hermopolis from the crest of the Catholic portion	209
Hermopolis from the American-maintained orphanage	212
The orphanage way of baking is common in a large part of the Near East	213
A class in the N.E.R. Orphanage on Syra. Being natural floor-squatters, Armenians do not mind lack of chairs	213
The wide, stone-paved water-front of most Greek islands is not only the landing-place but the coffee-house section	220
A street in the Catholic section of Hermopolis	221
The reward of a Greek boot-black at home is low indeed when his client wears the old-fashioned boots	221
A Greek-American meeting "the old folks at home" for the first time since his sixteenth birthday	228
A crowd of women and girls about a trickling faucet or spring is one of the most familiar sights in Greece	228
A woman of Mytilene weaving in her little den-like house	229
Charcoal-burners preparing a heap of oak branches among the high hills of Mytilene	244
Villagers of the mountains of Mytilene	244

	FACING PAGE
An official of Mount Athos	245
A Cretan, who once lived in Keokuk, Iowa, walked with us to Karyes	252
One of the "Papal guard" of Aghion Oros, which we call Mount Athos	252
Karyes, capital of the semi-independent monkish republic of Mount Athos	253
A courtyard of one of the many huge monasteries of Mount Athos	253
A cross-section of the common dining-room of a great Russian monastery of Mount Athos	272
Two of the five hundred and thirty Russian monks in a single monastery of Mount Athos	273
The lion's gate of Mycenæ	280
Nauplia, and the island home of Greece's official executioner, who is himself a convict	281
Looking across the platia, or central square, of Sparta	288
Sparta to-day	289
Modern Spartans	289
Among the ruins of the medieval city of Mistra, which clung to a steep hillside on the edge of the Sparta plain	304
A woman of the Taygetos, on the trail we followed over that historic range	305
Only an abandoned monastery, inhabited by one hermit, remains now on the summit of Ithome	305
The contrast of evergreen trees and age-ripened stones makes Olympia a sight to see even to-day	312
Plentiful shade and a constant breeze made Olympia endurable even on a Grecian midsummer day	313
One row still remains of the arched stones that roofed the entrance of participants in the ancient Olympic games . . .	313
Corfu is made doubly picturesque by its ancient fortress . .	320
A young Albanian waiting at Corfu for a sail-boat to his near-by native land	321
A genial gentleman from Albania, on the wharf at Corfu . .	321

	FACING PAGE
Patras, second port of Greece	328
The monastery of Megaspelæon is built over and takes its name from an immense cave at the base of a mighty mountain cliff	329
A woman of Kalyvia Arachovina, engaged in the spare-time occupation of the mountainous region at the foot of Parnassus	336
In the summer, when crops are worth stealing, sleeping plat- forms spring up in all the fertile parts of Greece . . .	336
The awesome gorge at Delphi is one of the sights of Greece .	337
The men of Arachova do not buy their pitchforks in a shop, any more than the women do the family garments	337
What the well-dressed Cretan boy will wear	352
Eleutherios Venizelos, once again premier and long the outstand- ing statesman of Greece	352
The male costume of Crete also includes a heavy jacket . .	353
A Cretan family	353
Archæologically speaking, Crete is especially noted for the pre- Grecian ruins of Knossos	356
This is by no means the largest or most artistic of the great jars uncovered at Knossos	357
The brilliant colors of these restorations of the wall paintings of ancient Knossos are proved authentic by remnants in the museum of Herakleion	357

I DISCOVER GREECE

CHAPTER I

IN THE WAKE OF THE CRUSADERS

WHEN I took deck passage from Beirut to Cyprus on the ancient *Belkas*, I found fifty members of the American Academy at Larnaca braving similar accommodations. Besides, being already May, it was cooler on the hatch covers than in the dry-goods-box-like state-rooms of the little Egypt-to-Turkey-and-back coasting steamer. Many of the boys had never before been off their island, and they had left it this time only long enough to whitewash in hockey the American University of Beirut and trounce it in football—or rather, its anemic European relative, soccer. Three American, one tolerating English, and five native teachers shared the cabinless hardships of their charges. The round-trip deck passage was a dollar or two, but it cost the American teachers twenty dollars each for a British and a French visa on their ten-dollar passports. The others, being British subjects, paid nothing to England and not much more than that to France.

There were among us many pilgrims on their way to Mecca. Several of them had come down from Damascus with me. For it costs no more to go from Syria to Port Saïd by way of Cyprus than direct; and Ibn Sa'ud has not yet seen fit to reopen the overland route by the still Lawrence-disrupted railway to Medina. Some of the future hadji stretched out on their rugs down in the hold, others along the hatch covers, the women still wearing their veils.

As fellow deck passengers there were also fifty or sixty huge turtles from Alexandretta. I could barely lift one of the smallest, yet they cost only a few shillings each at the one spot in the Mediterranean where they are caught—though twice that per slice in Cairo's tourist hotels. They travel even to London. Now and then a sailor threw water on them, and canvas was spread over them during the hottest hours of the day, unless every one overlooked that duty. But day and night they lay disgruntled on their backs, evidently with no means of defense or of retaliation for this treatment. For though they often savagely protruded ugly-looking heads that made the timid among us fear for our legs, we all soon learned to follow in the bare footsteps of the sailors and those passengers familiar unto contempt with them, who stepped as nonchalantly on their tile-like bellies as on the deck itself. Even then the creatures did not so much as grunt; merely squirmed, if anything. They would not bite even when invited, and seemed to sleep. Perhaps they dreamed, for their flappers beating on the bare deck woke us often during the night.

The haughty first- and second-class passengers missed all this, and also (perhaps) the Arab-like songs which the students seemed to prefer most of the night to the few old American songs—betraying the vintage of their teachers—they knew. Like most people who seldom travel, they did not mind losing a night's sleep. True, I did get a few cold snatches of light slumber on the bare deck. But the space available for each of us on the slightly sloping hatch covers was too short, and too hard; and the place in the bow with more room had the disadvantage of being open to the four winds, which blew upon us even up through the anchor holes.

There was a crescent moon; and at two A. M. a wise man, who had once been to sea before, aroused us all by announc-

ing that Greco Light was in sight, followed by much pro and con discussion as to the truth and importance of this statement. Cabin passengers also missed the sunrise; and orders from gruff Arab seamen to get up and move while they washed down the decks. The caste line, not that of color, divides humanity out here in the Near East—until a swift kick calls attention to the fact that an American expects to be treated like a gentleman in any class.

We tied up soon after sunrise before Othello's Tower in the old Venetian walls of Famagusta. Lest you have forgotten Famagusta, it is that "Seaport in Cyprus" where one Desdemona lost her life in a pillow fight brought on by the probably false gossip of a surly fellow named Iago. A semi-English family with Cypriot blood now occupies the house on top of the city wall which is the reputed residence of Othello in his Iago-blasted days. If the jealous Moor actually lived there, most of our Shaksperian stage settings are far too lavish, and they forget the chickens, stray dogs, and similar properties, not to mention the magnificent flowers growing in more or less whitewashed gasoline tins.

Near by, an aged church-mosque of the same gray stone as the city wall is now a gasoline warehouse. On the wharf outside the walls were baskets of oranges, lemons, and the like, awaiting shipment. Also a place for delousing all third-class passengers and their baggage. But thanks to experience and a bit of finesse both I and mine escaped this ordeal. While the teachers struggled to make the students occupy the poor as well as the good automobiles provided to take them back to Larnaca, I went for a walk on the wall. It is one of the most impressive city walls in the world—a huge stone thing as broad as a boulevard, its moat filled with evergreen trees whose tops barely reach that of the wall itself. Time has here and there eaten deep holes in the gray kind of sand-

stone of which it was built. There are pastures on the crest of the wall; massive gates, not Z-shaped for the confounding of evil spirits, as in China, but straightforward, even if tunnel-like in their narrowness.

Files of camels plodding in through those narrow gates looked absurdly out of place; somehow a camel always does on an island. There were many lions also, but those are merely bas-reliefs in stone, dating from Venetian days, of the Bible-brandishing Lion of St. Mark, over the gates and elsewhere; and they are hardly lifelike enough to frighten any but a very nervous man with an ingrown imagination or an overgrown conscience. Trucks and automobiles, as well as camels, went in and out.

Within the ancient walls are many gardens, irrigated by perpetually circling blindfolded animals, and presided over by surly Turks who complain of trespassing even for mere photography. In the courtyard of the prison in the heart of the old town there are ground designs of whitewashed cannon-balls such as were used in gigantic sling-shots in the good old days. Wooden beds and a single blanket for each prisoner, out airing in the sunshine now, are one of many evidences of English influence, even if you almost never see an Englishman on the island. Greeks, or at least white men, are not only prisoners but beggars about town.

The hugest of several more or less ruined stone churches inside the walls is St. Sophia, the cathedral of Venetian days, long since a mosque, with a poor, round, factory-chimney-like minaret grafted upon the right-hand one of its two decapitated towers, like a sprout on a stump. Minarets grafted upon decapitated church towers are numerous in Cyprus. For the churches which became mosques when the Turks took the island in 1571 remain so even now that it is a British

crown colony. England prides herself on forcing no religious changes upon her dependents.

We were off eventually for Larnaca, second port and third city of Cyprus, twenty miles away. Three teachers, a spoiled youth, and I, in a Chevrolet. Cyprus seems to be Chevrolet territory—about the right car, in size and price, for a medium-sized, not very wealthy island, with quite all the speed the island laws allow. Made in Canada, too; so it pays no duty. The district about Famagusta has more Toronto windmills than trees. Hereabouts there are many oranges, and they require constant irrigation. Elsewhere, if there are no streams or aqueducts, water-wheels with endless trip-buckets and troughs, often of stone, carry the water from wells to fairly fertile fields. Blindfolded horse or donkey goes endlessly round and round; like that of the housewife, their work is never done.

Flashes mildly of interest along the way. A good road, not always well surfaced, bore a fair number of automobiles, though of course no such pleonasm of them as in the United States. Wheat already cut and harvested; crawling in ox-cart loads to the threshing-floors. Women working in the fields; evidently not Mohammedans, though there are many Turks about Famagusta and all along the north coast. One of the advantages of the harem form of civilization, as of the bound feet of China, is that the women are spared some field labors. Cumbersome carts, of two wheels; even the people are slow and cumbersome. Automobile drivers are much less wild than on the mainland. One reason is that British laws are strict, and rather well enforced. Strict in other matters than speed, too, it seems; a fine, for instance, if a car carries more than its natural capacity, if there is more than one person, besides the driver, in the front seat. In the rest of

the Near East, even in British-ruled Palestine, the law appears to allow all the speed or load or mistreatment the gasoline-drinking beast will bear.

Sheep, mules, donkeys, camels, and ponderous two-wheeled carts are another reason why chauffeurs are not in too great a hurry. The cart-drivers are usually asleep, the road frequently blocked. Mules learn to swing over to the left (for Cyprus has that insular English custom of passing on the right) when they hear a car coming, but slowly, as if they preferred not to wake their drivers. Later on, driving at any speed is decidedly dangerous, especially between sunset and the time when the frugal drivers wake up and light their lanterns, before dropping off again. So the placid gait of life in Cyprus is refreshing—and also exasperating, if you chance to be in a hurry. Even American residents acquire the ox-gait, and do not know it, until some other American lands among them or they take an excursion into the outside world. Many members of another contented family, well represented in Cyprus, a family large and widespread and industrious, in spite of occasional raucous protests from somewhere beneath flapping ears, help to set the pace of life there. Yet, believe me or not, I actually saw during that ride a man currying a camel!

Larnaca is rather a languid town, with the pleasant and unpleasant features common to islands, a naïve gawkiness, much given to the unconscious rather than impudent offense of staring. The chief occupation of its more than ten thousand people seems to be sitting in the shade. Minarets here and there; leisurely carriages; placid streets, not badly paved; trees plentiful. One can see through the houses into gardens beyond; women sit sewing in the passageways; men make shoes, clothes, furniture, in quiet little shops. A pier runs far out into the Mediterranean, like the beginning of a

bridge to the mainland, symbolical, perhaps, of the hope of eventual escape.

The Bank of Cyprus, having a monopoly, calls a pound five dollars on your letter of credit; and on top of that come exchange charges, stamps, what not. Even the bankers are so ox-gaited that it is a real transaction to cash a twenty-dollar traveler's check, and the resultant cash on hand is considerably under four pounds sterling. Nor will foresight help you; for you cannot get this insular money anywhere except on the island, unless in the very unlikely event of meeting some one leaving there with money still in pocket. Luckily, after that first bunco game fellow-American residents who wished to send money home had faith enough to accept my personal check. Instead of using English money, Cyprus has its own pound notes (printed in English, and on one side only), and has shilling, sixpence, and a few three-pence coins. For some other strange reason there are only nine "piasters" to the shilling, instead of twelve, though the coppers look quite like pennies and half-pennies. Once more the nuisance of a pocket full of hard money, silver and copper, whenever you change a pound, as in Egypt and Palestine, and England itself.

At the school, after lunch, a shower-bath; and a nap for every one. Classes and boarding-school conditions as nearly American as could reasonably be expected so far afield. More than two hundred boys from all over Cyprus attend the Academy. Sixty percent are Greek, twenty-two Armenian, fifteen Turkish, a few Jews, Russians, Syrians, and one Assyrian. The last two are not at all the same. The Assyrians are a people of Nineveh and Babylon, now Christians, and hard up from Turkish persecution, though little known to the outside world.

In a toy park across the somewhat dusty street-road

bounding the Academy grounds is a marble bust of Zeno the Stoic, scowling with a dissatisfied air upon the dry, sketchy pleasance he adorns. Zeno once lived in Larnaca. Perhaps he had been done at the bank just before being busted—that is, reduced to a bust, if you know what I mean. On another edge of town may be seen a Phœnician tomb cut in solid rock, in which the dead were laid to rest four thousand years ago. There are many such tombs about the island, some already discovered; and whole buried cities, with temples, palaces, and wine-shops.

But the principal object of interest in Larnaca is the main church of the town, not far back of the water-front, St. Lazarus—Greek Orthodox, of course. Although the Bible loses sight of him after he was raised from the dead, it seems that the Jews picked on Lazarus—for having too much good luck or something—and finally set him adrift in a boat from Jaffa. That was evidently a favorite Jewish tossing-off place in the olden days; Jonah, you may remember, also began his famous journey at Jaffa. Lazarus floated over to Cyprus and became first bishop there before he died at Larnaca. Somehow I had always taken it for granted that once restored to life he went on living forever.

The church inside the monastery is at least venerable for its antiquity, being more than a thousand years old; and no doubt saw many a gallant sight during the days when Cyprus was held by the Knights of Malta and was the last camping-ground of the Crusaders before they crossed to the Holy Land. It is whitewashed and has the usual garish, tawdry Greek Orthodox interior, unimpressive compared with the rug-covered, pictureless solemnity of a mosque. Naturally the church bearing his name would not be complete without the bones of Lazarus. But though it contains the priceless possession of his tomb, it is empty; for his bones were long

ago dug up and are now interned in Marseilles, in a little church near the "old port" there. Not that such a trifle disturbs the faith of the devout believer, to whom the very name of saint gives any relic an odor of sanctity. Odor indeed, for so perfectly to the life—or, rather, to the death—is the near-by painting of the raising of Lazarus that with a realism to be envied by the most modern of artists one of the bystanders is depicted holding his nose.

I sped inland late that afternoon in a missionary side-car to the island capital, Nicosia. May I never live on a left-handed island! Goats and sheep are formidable enough to a side-car passenger, not to mention heavy freight moving by very leisurely mule or ox-carts—and what American, even of the missionary temperament, can learn to keep to the left? The road was filled, too, with homing peasants of both sexes, as many women as men; two women, or a woman and a man, on each donkey, the wife (surely!) always behind and sitting sidewise, the man, in the freedom of his sex, perhaps astride. Two passengers, if not three, on every donkey, three or four on a mule; carts with a dozen or more, and many pedestrians from among the unlucky, every man Jack and sister Jane of them carrying a long hand-forged sickle. Even the men and women whose duty it is to keep the roads in repair take to the fields at harvest time. The last few miles we had almost to crawl, which is not natural to a motor-cycle. For it was that perilous hour between twilight and the lighting of lanterns.

Trees are rare in the Cyprus landscape, except at the top of the highest mountain; and such grass as there is was yellow-brown. Some eucalyptus, to be sure, many of them huge, evidently brought here so long ago that most of the islanders thought them native. But on the whole Cyprus is very nearly treeless. Flat-topped, barren, and curiously cone-shaped

mountains or high hills stood forth far and near. Many have what look like round forts, like "Happy Hooligan" hats, on the summits. Craters, one might have guessed, but for the assurance that the mountains of Cyprus are not volcanic. Many vineyards; for there are fair, if too sweet, wines in Cyprus.

We passed near the one Jewish colony on the island, established about 1880, all members from Russia. But the past year had been so bad, with so little wheat and so much straw, that they were moving out. Perhaps they thought Palestine offers something better, which is very doubtful; and they could hardly improve their lot by going back to Russia. Past the island leper colony, not large; then close to an Armenian orphanage maintained by private means, with five hundred, though room for a thousand, inmates. Finally, Nicosia, with a trip half round the town to one of the tight little gates and through a maze of narrow streets to an American supper.

Nicosia is said to be named for the Nile god of fertility, he of the frank or the indecent pose, according to how "modern" you are, to be seen on Egyptian monuments. It is surrounded by an old Venetian wall of stone, round, or rather, star-shaped. Sloping cut-stone sides are filled in with earth—like a great earth wall, later faced with stone as an after-thought. The top is so wide that it has good-sized fields between its two stone ramparts. Some are fenced; rope-makers working, donkeys grazing, loafers loafing in the patches of dusty shade. The gates are little; but there are two wide openings cut at later date. Imposing, yet less so than the wall of Famagusta.

An English colony without English signs (these being all in Greek); even police who speak no English—and wear no trousers. Is it Scotch influence or pride in well-developed legs that makes the English and their disciples so partial to

"shorts"? At least the police of Cyprus occasionally scrub their knees, which is more than can be said of the countrymen in boots. A red English post-box here and there set back into the city wall. A police or army officer drilling recruits down in the pine-forested moat gave his commands in English, though the chances are almost certain that he knows no other word of that language. "Rhight turn! *Rhight* turn! Wake up!" all bellowed in the best army-drilling style—and every ordinary remark in Greek.

The "American Barber Shop" in the placid main street of Nicosia is perhaps the most nearly so of any in the Near East. The proprietor and his son once lived in the United States, and brought home ideas on comfort and sanitation which even the English have not attained. Evidently not so greatly appreciated as it should have been.

An idiot Armenian youth roams the streets of the capital. He was an infant prodigy, so bright that people knew of him far away. Then the Turks made him watch them behead his father, mother, and brother; violated his two sisters several times before his eyes before they carried them off. Since that day he has had no mind. But that is so ordinary a story in the Near East that only I notice him.

Along the streets the same den-like shops, the same long-hour, unhurried, yet industrious and patient hand-work as in all the East, and a part of Europe. Men and boys make wonderful looking mandolins—I cannot testify to the tone—of all sizes, of beautiful colors, polishing and varnishing them out in the streets or in shaded shop doorways. Huge bales of cotton in other shops; dirty wool, sorted and clipped by women. Little holes-in-the-wall sell leather, make shoes; a veritable Vulcan's den of a blacksmith-shop; milling, grinding of flour, pounding of brass; a boy turning a big lathe-driving wheel—all in the principal streets. Round loaves of

bread weighing several pounds each are dumped into an open cart and delivered like so much coal. Farther on, silver-workers are making those intricate trinkets some people like. Farther still, tinsmiths turn gasoline cans into useful things. In the very middle of one of the busiest narrow streets is the tomb of a Moslem holy man, covered with an iron grating. Vehicles maneuver like tugboats to turn the adjacent corner. The water-man of Nicosia delivers the elixir of life from door to door in reddish earthenware jars, set in the twenty-one holes in the platform top of his mule-cart. Yet the capital has nearly twenty thousand inhabitants. Many bicycles, as usual in British islands. Perfect summer, even in May; flowers and birds everywhere.

The former principal church of Nicosia, a mosque since the Turks first came, retains only the stumps of two once imposing towers, two slender minarets peering above what is left of them. The entire interior is now carpeted with mats and rugs. A mihrab is cut back into what must once have been a wall covered with Venetian religious paintings. Not a picture now, of course; merely two rows of whitewashed pillars, though the front and back windows are still reminiscent of Catholic days. It seems queer to find a mosque the most imposing structure in the capital of a British island, to visit it beside a sock-footed fez-and-turban wearer, otherwise dressed like a London broker, yet who expects a tip for his guidance. A screened place for women; and for the non-Moslem visitor the usual impossible slippers with crushed heels, that never cling to a shoe for five steps, symbolical of inefficient, unhappy-go-lucky Islamism.

Outside the city walls there is a museum for those to whom collections of the dead world's junk appeal. Mainly pottery, made on the island since 3000 B. C. Much like it is still made there, except that it is far less artistic. In those

olden days people were not so lazy, had fewer distractions, less easy-going rulers. The birth of a child, in three scenes, in crude pottery of some time between 800 and 700 B. C., the mother sitting up during the process. A midwife, but no male doctor; women were evidently more modest in those days. Obvious, scanty placards, giving only information which the most stupid visitor cannot but know at a glance, when a few sane words might tell us much we should like to know. "Horse—800 B. C.," yet bad as it is, you could not possibly mistake it for a pig. "Armor—Middle Ages," beneath a Crusader's iron sweater. One might believe the curator tired, like most Cypriots, were he not widely reputed as very keen on his job. Just lack of travel and experience, perhaps, and his startling infirmity. Men visitors who speak to him privately will be shown a locked collection of earthenware, mainly flat night-lamps, in a side room; things suggestive of the pictures offered for sale by sneaking men on street corners in Paris, and testimony on the decadence of the Roman Empire.

CHAPTER II

CYPRUS UNDER BRITISH RULE

THE map of Cyprus still most seen there is that surveyed in 1882 by one H. H. Kitchener. It shows a ham-shaped island in the eastern Mediterranean, pointing its shank scornfully at what is left of Turkey, dimly seen forty miles away. Its 3584 square miles make it the largest island in the Mediterranean except Sicily and Sardinia; it calls itself *Kypros*, from the Greek word *Cypress*, our name coming from the Latin for "copper" (or vice versa). On the north coast the *Kyrenia* range rises to 3343 feet; and, towering often into the clouds, the center of the island culminates in *Mount Troodos*, one of the several *Mount Olympuses* of ancient times, at 6406 feet. The plain between, in which lies *Nicosia*, is sixty miles long and from ten to twenty wide. Most of the island rivers are mountain torrents in the rainy season and not much or nothing at all the rest of the year. A tree-scanty, ill-watered island blazed upon for many centuries by a generally cloudless sun.

Before the Turks came, the big plain of *Nicosia* was covered with forest, they say. It was denuded to furnish Turkey and Egypt with lumber and firewood. Yet pines, oaks, cypresses, even cedars may still be found hidden away or up out of reach in the mountains; and in the valleys are acacia, alder, arbutus, bay, laurel, juniper, plane, Persian lilac, oleander, myrtle. The last was consecrated to *Venus*, whom the Cyprians once worshiped—and to some extent still



Famagusta, "A Seaport in Cyprus"



Looking across Famagusta, whose Venetian cathedral is now topped by
a minaret



The water-men of Nicosia deliver the elixir of life from door to door

do. For all its thirst, the island raises good, though rather small, potatoes, wheat, barley, oats, olives, cotton, vetches, carobs (the last two, roughly, species of big beans), not to mention various fruits and their products, notably raisins and wine. The kashaw, a kind of white apricot, is a Cyprus specialty. But only thirty percent of the island is cultivated.

In ancient days Cyprus seems to have been a kind of godly Coney Island, where the gods and goddesses of old lived, loved, and fought. Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus, or whatever you are accustomed to call the goddess of love, fruitfulness, beauty, and their attendant misfortunes, made it almost her principal residence. Most of the immortal and many of the mortal great of ancient Greece at least visited Cyprus. Waves, layers of history have swept over it, each leaving a little sediment behind. Phœnicians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Crusaders, Jews, Turks, English have in their turn imposed their rule upon it. It is first audibly mentioned in 1450 B. C., when Tholmes or Ptolemy of Egypt conquered it, probably not for the first time. Herodotus tells us that Amasis the Egyptian reconquered it about 535 B. C.; then, ten years later, Cambyses of Persia, who ruled Egypt also.

Cyprus was the first station out of Tyre for the Phœnician navigators, the last stepping-stone of the Crusaders before they fell upon the wicked Saracens. A king of Cyprus sent armor to Agamemnon on his way to the siege of Troy. It was a populous island long before that, said to have had at the period of its greatest prosperity four million inhabitants. In 502 B. C. the Cypriots revolted against the Persians, joining the Ionians. The Persians, aided by the Phœnicians, won, and reduced the principal city. The head of Onecillos, leader of the Cyprians, hung on the gate of the Phœnician city of Amathus until the bees filled it with honey; hence a yearly

sacrifice down to recent times. After various struggles with the Persians—who, one gathers, were not deeply loved—the island fell to Alexander in 332 B. C.; to another Ptolemy in 295, and to the Romans, as part of Cicilia on the mainland, in 58 B. C.

In 45 A. D. Paul and Barnabas landed at Salamis and converted the Roman deputy at Paphos—sacred to Venus. Thus, we are to believe, Cyprus was the first country to have a Christian ruler. Seventy years later the Jews rose against the Roman government, ruined Salamis, and massacred 250,000 Cyprians in two years. Lucius suppressed this revolt and expelled the Jews, who were killed if they came back, even through shipwreck. In 1911 there were still only 193 of them on the island.

Cyprus bowed to the Byzantine emperors from 395 to 1184. The Saracens took Larnaca in 632, but it was soon freed by an expedition from Byzantium. In 1184, one Isaac Commenus came as ruler, with false papers. Such tricks must have been easy, the ruling of distant holdings hard, in the delightful days before the cable and the radio. Commenus formed a kingdom and became a tyrant; but he made the mistake of mistreating Berengaria of Navarre. Richard II (Cœur de Lion) of England, to whom Berengaria was affianced—nay, who later no less than married her—quite properly thrashed Commenus, after the stern fashion of the time, in 1191. In those naïve days, one gathers, husbands considered their affair even what their wives had done or had done unto them before they were married.

That job finished, Richard took upon himself the governing of the island. But like many another lion-hearted fighter he was hard up, needed money for the third Crusade. Common stock in this enterprise was about the lowest thing on the tape. So he sold the island to the Knights Templar, for

a hundred thousand bezants, according to the real-estate reports of the day. The bezant was a medieval gold coin of the Byzantine Empire worth \$2.42, or a silver one worth \$0.72; and as realtors' clerks were notorious for their carelessness even in those days, it is not recorded whether the price was \$72,000 or \$242,000. Probably Richard himself did not know. In any case the amount was equal to at least a million in purchasing power in the present market. It was to be paid 40,000 down and the balance by instalments.

But the Templars had the usual instalment difficulties. Their own debtors did not pay on time, the boss was slow on salary, groceries went up, and so on, all through the familiar cycle. Or perhaps they did not find the island as advertised—though high-powered selling methods were then not even in their infancy. At any rate, they asked Richard to take his island back, and refund. The first was easy; the second was impossible, as so often happens. For Richard had already spent the forty thousand bezants, silver or gold. So he talked Guy de Lusignan, presumably the chewing-gum millionaire of the time, into taking the thing off his hands. Richard was evidently rather a good persuader, a splendid follow-up or outside man who squandered his talents, and his bezants, in the social jungles beyond the pale of business and respectability.

The Lusignans ruled from 1192 until 1489; and under them Cyprus prospered. The last of them, Venetian widow of James III, gave the island to Venice, then fighting the Turks. Ideal golf-land though it is, Venice had little else than war on her mind and gave the Cypriots only military rule, did little for the island except build walls and forts and churches, and it steadily deteriorated until 1570, when the Turks attacked again. After four months of heroic defense Famagusta, besieged by the sultan, was taken. The

chief defender, Marcantonio Bragandino, was skinned alive by a Jewish hangman. His skin, stuffed with straw, after the best taxidermist methods of the time, was sent to Constantinople, where his brother and son bought it at a high price a few years later and buried it in SS. Giovanni e Paulo in Venice.

The Turks misruled the island for three centuries until, on June 4, 1878, England took it over, in a way England has, for the duration of the war she and the Turks were just then waging against the Russians. I am assured by a most reputable Englishman that the British got Cyprus by mistake. According to his version, Lord Palmerston—or was it Beaconsfield?—went to Harrow or Eton, and consequently knew no geography. England really wanted Crete; with its splendid harbor. But his Grace's secretary was ill that morning, and milord was so unwise as to go and see the sultan on his own. After the coffee and the dancing girls and the ribald stories, the caller told the sultan he wanted an island in the Mediterranean whose English name began with "C," though he could not exactly remember the rest of it. The sultan, being either wise or indifferent, and having many islands to give away in those halcyon days, had his medicine-men identify the plot in question and told his Etonian or Harrowing guest to go ahead and take it home with him. But England felt that might not quite be cricket, you know, that her altruism might be misunderstood if the map of the world was so openly disturbed. So she left the island where it was and has ever since sent out young Englishmen to show it how to behave. Yet though she lost the splendid harbor of Crete she bungled into good luck again; for the plain of Nicosia is one of the finest airdromes in the world.

More formally speaking, as it is solemnly written in the

history books, England and Turkey signed a convention in 1878 according to which England was to occupy Cyprus as long as Russia occupied the transcaucasian provinces taken from Turkey. Russia still has them. Though Cyprus paid nominal tribute to Turkey until the World War, and there was a shadowy sovereignty by the sultan, the island was administered through the British Foreign Office, as a kind of protectorate, and some British troops were always kept there.

A "perpetual lease" is not only a delicate artifice to save susceptibilities which would be injured by open conquest, but it is in some ways better than ownership, as it furnishes a convenient fiction for not recognizing any undesirable liabilities, while retaining all the advantages of possession. But however sharp the bargain may have been, England does not seem to have realized all that might have been expected. At first there was a real-estate boom, up to prices never before known on the island; but after a few months it became evident that the property was not so very productive as it had been reported. It is one thing to annex an island, another to fill it with inhabitants, ambitious and energetic inhabitants at that. Moreover, Cyprus had an enemy worse than the Turks and Russians combined: in one year the Government spent £35,000 against the locusts, which come in clouds that darken the day and destroy every green thing; hardly a recommendation to agricultural immigrants. But mere locusts did not seriously interfere with imperial purposes. In those bucolic days before the airplane was suspected, England had a dream of digging a canal from the Mediterranean to the Sea of Galilee, passing down the Valley of the Jordan to the Dead Sea and by another canal across the desert to the head of the Gulf of Akaba; and Cyprus at the end of the Mediter-

ranean made it a part of that scheme, which with the Suez Canal was to give England two strings to her bow for securing the passage to India.

In 1914 the convention of 1878 was declared void, and on November 5 of that year England formally annexed the island, requiring all Ottoman subjects either to become British or leave the island within two months. Only a few left. Finally, in 1925, Cyprus was proclaimed a crown colony. Thus exit from history the favorite playground of the ancient gods; enter into Nirvana. Many a mile-post along the island roads, bearing the device V(crown)R, as well as others with E R and G R, leads the temperamentally suspicious wanderer to suspect that the gods had this end in mind some time ago.

As nearly as England has been able to count them, her new crown colonists are about 325,000 in number. Four fifths of them are Greeks, most of the others Moslem Turks. Syrians in a few coast districts make up nearly all the 3200 people outside these categories. Many villages have no Turks at all. The bulk of the inhabitants are not real Greeks, we are told, but Levantines or Pontines, as Greeks long domiciled in Asia Minor are called. Nor for that matter, it is said, are the twenty percent of Moslems really Turks, but almost as Greek in blood as the "Greeks" their neighbors, being mainly descended from converts. The language spoken is different enough from that of modern Greece and her islands so that a man from Cyprus is easily recognized by his speech. The ancient Cypriot language, a dialect of ancient Greek, was written in characters only recently deciphered.

Yet ever since her modern resurrection Greece has cast longing eyes at Cyprus, and the great majority of Cypriots wish to be ruled by Greece. Naturally the Moslem minority does not. Those considering themselves Greeks liken what

they call their motherland to a sloppy but kind and understanding parent, and England to a stepmother who does not take much care of them, or rather, who is strict and orderly, makes the island wash behind the ears, but shows it little affection. Those with government jobs are satisfied with the status quo, as is usual the world over. The others say England does little for them; the simple country people, at least, naïvely believe that Greece would do more. But all of them much prefer England to imperialistic Italy, bombasting in the neighboring island of Rhodes.

Mainly, the demand for reunion is sentimental on both sides, though Cyprus offers material resources and room for surplus Greek population; also what happens to it might have an important bearing on the fate of Rhodes, as we shall see later. To England, Cyprus is of both economic and strategic importance. The Cyprus Asbestos Company, for instance, a British concern capitalized at £600,000, recently installed new plants and machinery. There is copper, chrome, some vanadium. Strategically, Lord Palmerston's find is not now considered of overwhelming importance, even with the glaring duce inclined to consider the Mediterranean an Italian lake, though there are rumors of a modern harbor "for imperial purposes" at Famagusta. For submarine experience during the World War proved the Suez Canal less useful as a means of imperial communications than it was formerly considered, therefore that Cyprus and Malta had been overrated.

In fact, in 1915, Cyprus was promised to Greece as a reward for joining the Allies. But you know what promises in those days meant. Besides, King Constantine, with his German wife, messed matters up. Later, France protested against growing Greek strength and England promised not to cede the island without getting French permission. France is less afraid of Greece now, hence something must be laid to

British greed—or shall we say conservatism? Some Armenian and a few Greek exiles from the new Turkey have been admitted to Cyprus; but though it is underpopulated, as population goes in that part of the world, England frowns upon the admission of refugees in any great numbers, because they would increase the Greek element.

After the proclamation making the island a British crown colony was read in the public square of Nicosia, the High Commissioner told the Greek archbishop that “the question of the union of Greece has been finally closed and cannot be reopened.” That’s that, you would think. But petitions and memorials continue, until the British are losing patience. The fiftieth anniversary of the eclipse of Cyprus under the shadow of the Union Jack was recently celebrated, yet some Cypriots still hope, and Greece still looks longingly at what she might have had in 1915, but can probably never have now.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies chided the Greek members of the Legislative Council of Cyprus who petitioned the crown direct, and added that he did not consider the people of Cyprus in the stage of development to deserve a greater degree of self-government than they already have. As much might be said of many parts of the United States, but politicians are not given to saying it. There is an English Governor General or High Commissioner and a Legislative Council, of distinctly limited powers, formerly of eighteen members—nine Greek and three Moslem and six British. When the island was made a crown colony, the Greek members were raised to twelve, which brought joy to the Greeks, until they found they were to be checkmated by three added British members. So now the total is twenty-four, and no change except in numbers. The twelve Greek and three Moslem representatives are elected. The nine English members

(though there is virtually no English population) are appointed by the governor from among the higher clerks of his office, and the governor himself has the deciding voice in case of a tie. Naturally, the Moslems usually vote with the British against their hereditary enemies, and the English occasionally make it worth their while (though in no reprehensible manner, as legislative bodies go) to do so. Thus England can tell the world that Cyprus has a representative government. Ottoman law, extinct now in Turkey, still prevails in Cyprus, except as the Council from time to time amends or adds to it. Officially the island is divided into six districts, has six cities and six hundred and sixty villages.

The Cypriots in the mass complain of heavy taxes and that "the Government takes everything. They tax even our donkeys! They have declared much of the island government land and will not even let the people cut firewood or graze goats on it." White markers all through the hills show the limits of this public domain. Not long ago peasants burned a big section of forest in revenge. The complainants contend that the English have £500,000 of Cyprus public money in the British Treasury and will not even give an accounting of it. They complain also against the £92,000 a year charged to the island for the benefit of the shareholders of the Ottoman loan of 1855, of which Great Britain contributes £50,000 annually, assessing the rest against Cyprus. There are loud demands to be relieved of this annual tribute "to English stockholders." The Cyprians insist it has kept the island impoverished, prevented the carrying out of much-needed public works, and even some Englishmen agree with them. But the Under Secretary of the Colonial Office recently told the House of Commons that no changes were contemplated in this matter.

The Greek element insists that people earning five pounds

a year cannot pay taxes and buy clothes too, that many of the islanders stick to their old-fashioned costumes because they cannot afford new and modern ones. Skilled laborers get four shillings a day, unskilled two shillings, in the capital, and much less in the country districts. "People working like slaves for a shilling or two a day are taxed out of decent clothes so that a bare hundred Englishmen can live in luxury, on salaries of eighty to one hundred pounds a month and many perquisites. England sends out military men who know nothing about governing a colony and are not in the least interested in its people, but only in their tennis, tea, and bawth," said a Cyprus-born American citizen.

There is no water system even in Nicosia, continue the grumblers; and when the Government was asked to remedy this medieval condition, Englishmen were sent out who know nothing about such a problem, who reported that nothing could be done to supersede the water-man. Experienced men came from Germany and offered to give the city running water within a year, but the British would not listen. "Yet the Americans at Scouriotisa have piped water in every employee's house."

There is a telephone system in Cyprus—"but not for private use." At least, only rarely does an unofficial person succeed in using it. If it is a matter of life and death, ordinary people may get a call through by way of the police—perhaps. The trouble is that the Eastern Telegraph Company has long had, and is still long to have, a monopoly. Besides the Government, some private companies, including the Americans at Scouriotisa, have telephone systems of their own. One monastery has a private telephone from its main establishment at the top of a mountain to the annex at the foot. But such systems may function only within private domain. The American missionary doctor in Nicosia struggled for years before

he was allowed to run a telephone wire between his clinic and his house, because it had to cross a public street. Telegrams are only tolerably high-priced, considering the short distances; but the telegraph offices are closed at night.

The English reply that the island must be reforested before it will amount to anything; that this will take at least sixty years. The people live only in the present. They cut a walking-stick whenever the whim strikes them, turn their goats into new plantations and quickly ruin them. From the earliest times the forests of Cyprus were renowned. They so nearly covered the whole island in olden days that tracts equal to the area cleared were granted to individuals who undertook the cutting down of trees and the cultivation of this land. Such a procedure may have been all very well in the times of the Ptolemys. But its continuance through many centuries, for the benefit of Lusignans, Venetians, and Turks, has meant the ruin of the island.

The English are planting trees on denuded plains and mountain slopes. Only eighteen percent of the island's area is affected, yet even now, after a painful process of demarcation, survey, protection, the four hundred thousand acres of scanty forests still have to struggle against the browsing of thirty-five thousand very hardy, almost wild goats, and nearly as many other animals, including sheep. A man used to turn his goats into government land, prove that the Turks gave that land to his ancestors, and the Government could do nothing about it. Now that Cyprus has become a crown colony, no such claims are to be allowed after a certain date and all un-owned land will belong to the Government.

The English have given the island modern roads everywhere, in place of the few old meandering Turkish ones. They have brought schools, security, protection; they have started the silk industry at Paphos—in honor of Venus? The

Government is also working to exterminate the locusts. A man scooping them up in a big hat is a familiar sight. The natives see nothing in all this; they are interested only in immediate results. Not only are they really Orientals but they or their ancestors have been so often ravaged that it is bred in their bones to use all there is to-day, for fear the Turks will come and steal it to-morrow. They are too lazy, say their present rulers, sit down too much, even at work; only because they do not earn enough is it hard on them to pay proper taxes. To which the grumblers reply that most of them have so little land that often they cannot find any work to do.

Sir Ronald Storrs, of Lawrence and Jerusalem fame, was now governor of Cyprus, and lived in Nicosia. But reports had it that he is a bit pompous, or at least very English; and there is pain enough in this world without adding more gratuitously. One of the things I do only under compulsion is introduce myself to an Englishman, especially one with letters enough after his name to form an alphabet. Besides, he probably would not have told me all the secrets of his calling: the average official colonial Englishman is not usually garrulous about shop; and it is even conceivable that he would not have listened well to my advice on how to govern Cyprus. So after due cogitation I decided to let Government House plod on without my respects. Had I not already called upon and been graciously received by a real king, of a more approachable race?

Cyprus has long been an island of refuge. The persecuted or the defeated have often gone there, from stray Armenians to the ex-Grand Sherif of Mecca and former King of the Hejaz. This reputed lineal descendant of Mohammed (father of Lawrence's "prophet," Feisal, now King of Irak, of Emir Abdullah, Colonel Cox's puppet in Transjordan, of Ali,

lately driven into the sea by Ibn Sa'ud, and of a fourth son of parts unknown) was to have reigned at Mecca and Medina as head of a great Arab kingdom, while three of his sons ruled in his name at Jerusalem, Damascus, and Bagdad. Instead, he lives in one of the simpler of many one-story bungalows in the wide-streeted, well-treed newer part of Nicosia outside the walls. It was as unpretentious a house as even I might have rented had I settled down in Cyprus; not one in which you would expect to find the man who in World War days commanded the Holy Land of Islam.

I called on him that first morning, on my way to the walled city from the spacious but not too well-kept hotel outside the walls. Though nine o'clock had struck, the mainly black retainers, who seemed numerous about the place, appeared at the door and along the simple central hallway pulling their undershirts together. Finally one of them told me, in an imitation of either English or French, that "his Majesty would be graciously pleased" to have me come again at half-past ten.

There was only one negro boy with him when I did; and I had not been able to find an interpreter. I had, in fact, rather left that to the ex-Grand Sherif; and my Arabic is so decidedly sketchy that we talked mainly by signs, gestures, and silences—especially silences. The king seemed even better at silence than I. An impressive face; though I might never get to Mecca, it was pleasant to sit alone with the man from whom it had so long taken its orders.

He had come into the corner front room, opening on the veranda and street-road and on the bush-lined field behind him—a well-preserved man of more than eighty, with keen eyes, a grayish-khaki colored skin healthy-looking indeed for such an age; an air of considerable outdoor living. A white rope encircled his white cloth head-dress; a simple

indoor burnous covered him to the ankles. He drew his legs up under him on his semi-divan seat, clapped his hands three times. Service was not all it might have been; he rang a small bell, though as if he did not much care for this effeminate Western manner of summoning his henchmen. Yet Lawrence tells us that this man used to telephone from Mecca to Jiddah.

At length there broke on our ears quick staccato shouts outside, and in came a larger negro boy, in khaki, followed by several other retainers, who presently backed out, leaving behind two Bedouin chiefs from Amman in Transjordan; in fact, I had recently seen them there. I had made a snapshot the excuse for my call; few men will refuse to be mugged, even if they "will not be interviewed." Somehow my simple request was transmitted from my mind to his. The old king was courteous, with a hint of the hospitality of the desert; but he was chary. He had no doubt had too many tricks played upon him by the West. First he wished to see some of my photographs—whether as proof of the statement that I could make a picture or to find out how badly I could do so, I do not know. In a thoughtless moment I handed him one of my distant family. He *accepted* it at once, with many signs of pleasure. Perhaps because he, too, had four children; possibly because the uxorial face was immodestly uncovered. So stupid of me. Surely I had been in Spanish and Arab countries enough to know better than to show any one anything I wished to keep. Besides, had I but remembered, in another pocket I had a ragged print of myself and another Oriental king, who had once hung a decoration on me, by way of a department-store, at my expense. Certainly that would have proved that I was fit to hobnob with ex-kings.

The former ruler of Mecca looked a long time at the con-

fiscated snap-shot; set it up on his desk. Then he had the alleged interpreter tell me he was not properly dressed, but that I might come back the next Tuesday at the same hour and photograph him—and also the Bedouins from Amman, still waiting on a side divan to talk with him . . . at which threat they looked none too pleased. The king may have been spoofing them with a straight face; he looked like a man who could. I forgot to back out. But King Hussein was evidently accustomed to that form of unintentional disrespect, even if his servants, who showed a mixture of surprise and resentment as they handed me my hat with a "Here's your hat" manner, were not reconciled to it.

I had no expectation of being back in Nicosia the next Tuesday; and in fact I was not. But I did happen to get in the following Wednesday evening, and in passing the ex-king's bungalow on Thursday morning, I happened to remember; and, it being about half-past ten, I dropped in. Surprise on the face of ex-Grand Sherif Hussein, and something a little stronger than that from the not yet fully dressed blackish servants. But I easily covered my tracks with a little prevarication—implying without saying so that the interpreter and I must have misunderstood each other. "You—your Majesty knows how nearly alike Tuesday and Thursday sound in our absurd tongue."

His Majesty was graciously pleased to excuse my error. We went through the same formalities as on my earlier visit. He beckoned me toward a chair; drew his feet up under him on the divan. On his desk, in a little frame, was the lost picture of my family. He clapped his hands, scowled a bit, rang his bell, scowled again, whereupon in came the negro boy in khaki, through whom I persuaded the king to go out on the side veranda and pose, though he still protested he was not properly dressed for such an ordeal. The Bedouins

from Amman were gone—glad, no doubt, that I had not returned in time to involve them in so un-Koranic a sin. The negro boy was sharply admonished over a royal shoulder to cease trying to sneak himself into the background of the picture, and presto! the deed was done.

When we had returned to the reception room, his Majesty informed me through a somewhat better interpreter who had unostentatiously turned up that “he would never allow any one else to take his picture.” Whether this was a compliment, as my missionary friend of the motor-cycle assured me—that is, that I was thereby given exclusive rights to his royal face henceforth—or whether it meant something much less flattering, I am not sure to this day. At any rate, his Majesty’s dismissal was courtesy itself.



One of the many reasons why automobilists do little speeding on the highways of Cyprus



Strange plow-fellows are to be seen among the hills



A peasant woman of Cyprus



No wonder the men of Cyprus live to a ripe old age

CHAPTER III

TRAMPING IN OX-GAITED CYPRUS

STRIKING mountains of deforested color may be seen in almost any direction from Nicosia. The narrow, saw-toothed range of Kyrenia in the north rewards the perspiring climber. At Bella Paese is an old Venetian abbey and monastery, half in ruins, and for that reason an artistic addition to a pretty landscape. The old priest of the village who saw us about it—nor refused a tip for his services—showed us where the Turks used the sandstone wall of the monastery refectory for target practice.

The ruins of St. Hilarion, a medieval castle crowning a great rock hill of sheer jagged sides and far-reaching view over sea and island, still has much to tell of how life was lived in the Middle Ages. Its story is one of the enthralling episodes of the Crusades. Through its ruined windows or the clefts in pine-grasping rocks the town of Kyrenia sits as in a frame, far down below. Kyrenia has a little harbor with a flagstone-paved edge, reminding one of the toy shipping of Crusader days. The old fortress that flanks it is inhabited by Cypriot soldiers, and is for some reason forbidden to photographers. One feels far from the modern world in Kyrenia.

All along this orange-growing north coast, from Famagusta to Lefka, there are many Turks; perhaps because on clear days they can see across to Turkey. Moslem women, ghost-like in white, ride by on donkeys. The veil is largely a matter of form with them in Cyprus; most of them hold a

corner of a shawl-like garment in the mouth, or cover the chin by hand, when they sally forth in public.

I decided to walk through the heart of the island rather than dash around its coast roads to see mere cities and the indistinct ruins of a historic past. Friday is market day in Nicosia, and when I set out by Ford mail-and-passenger service on Thursday afternoon the road was alive with red pottery, ranging in size from pint to half-barrel, on carts, donkeys, pedestrians of both sexes. Flocks of goats and sheep also slowed us down. For all her drastic motor laws, Cyprus evidently is short on inspectors; even this Ford on his Majesty's service sadly needed adjustment. One Chevrolet I rode in later through the mountains by a precipice-flanking road apparently had no brakes at all; when in great danger the driver threw the clutch into reverse!

Every one in Cyprus takes a siesta from eleven to two or thereabouts: peasants, merchants, workmen; cart-men nap on mats beneath a scraggly tree, in any patch of shade; even the chauffeur falls asleep at the wheel. Public-service cars stop for rest and refreshments at the driver's favorite coffee-house on even a twenty-mile run. No wonder people live to a ripe old age in an island where napping is the principal occupation. But it was after three now. Whole families leisurely toiled in the fields, the baby propped up, in a bit of shade if possible. Men and women sit down to weed, to pull onions, to dig potatoes; they kneel or squat to cut grain with big sickles, three or four stalks at a time. They thresh sitting in a chair on the ox-drawn threshing-sled—and get off now and then to sit on a rock and rest! Winnow in the wind; methods as primitive as those of the Andean Indians. One advantage of being a peasant in Cyprus is that the women do most of the work. A worn-out stock, a race gone to sleep,

run down even physically, one feels, whether from persecution, intermarriage, lack of opportunity.

Men and women alike wear heavy hobnailed, knee-high boots. But only the men display their knees, bare knees, usually unscrubbed, between their high boots and their Oriental skirt-trousers. The island is poor; yet if the unnecessary cloth in the men's trousers were laid end to end it would reach to prosperity. Above the waist most men look quite European, though some of the upper half of the old costume remains in country and mountain districts. Below, they look as if they had lost their trousers and borrowed wife's mourning skirt, hitching it up and tucking it in behind like a Siamese sampot. Some wear long stockings, with garters below the knees—reminders, but for lack of soaping, of Louis XIV days. Others wear a cross between stockings and boots, of leather, with many holes and patches.

Only the men are picturesque in garb. The country women wear their hair down their backs, sometimes half covered with a kerchief. Their old-fashioned gowns are long and well-sleeved and high-necked enough to be quite proper in holy Zion City, Illinois, itself. Nay, more: in the mountain districts the women tuck white bloomers into their boots, and wear a skirt over them, hitching it up in times of physical stress. But the women never attain the cockiness of the men in their game-cock or bird's-tail trousers.

Ancient olive-trees that look as if they had struggled for centuries with thirst and scanty sustenance dot some of the fields and lower slopes. The evergreen carob-tree, with its long, sickle-shaped, fleshy pods, furnishes an important island crop. At the top of a steeple-like hill, last isolated peak of the central range, with a road winding up to it, poses the monastery of Stavrovouni, 2260 feet high, the first of many

Greek monasteries in isolated yet conspicuous places I was to see before the summer was over. A fair road, endless ugly hills, a dry and repulsive country, much of it with little more than scattered bushes.

I stepped out at a junction coffee-house called Skarino, while the mail and the other passengers, consisting of a lame man and a one-eyed woman with a wailing child, went on, after coffee and rest, to Limassol. During a seven-mile walk up a constant steep grade I saw one man on a donkey and, toward the end, a shepherd, whistling to his sheep. Some pines; greenness in spots; and at length upper and lower Lefkara, the smaller in a flat hollow below, the red-roofed main town high on a rocky ridge. Rather flirty girls of the town variety were taking their evening stroll a little way out along the highroad.

A quaint, stone-paved, mountain-minded place of tight streets, upper Lefkara, naïve people, a primitive hotel. I had only to wash in the cracked basin, dry myself on the fresh handkerchief-sized towel I insisted upon in place of a much soiled one, to the landlord's wonder, and stroll out, to find a crowd gradually coagulating about me. Before long it gathered a fat man who spoke English, to whom I confided that I could use a guide on the morrow. Though most of the villagers considered the trip I planned "impossible," a boot-black with his shop over a shoulder bespoke the position. When his ridiculous price had been brought down to merely an extravagant one we came to terms.

The fat man and a school-teaching youth who spoke better English and had more understanding of the queer mentality of people from the outside world took me walking out the other highway; told me proudly many virtues of their native town. True, it boasted no restaurant; but they succeeded in having a supper concocted for me in a general store. Cock-

tailed men gathered about, unsuccessfully hid their incredulity at my interpreted answers to the teacher's queries concerning my fabulous native land. One of them told the bootblack turned guide that he had seen me walking up the hill and could not have caught me on a mule if he had been riding one. General laughter; and I all but lost the guide then and there. In short, it was an Arcadian evening, followed by a wooden-floored bed so hard it was like finding some spat-wearing dude a prize-fighter, or a girlish-looking dancing partner a circus performer.

I was awakened at dawn by the uproar of hobnailed boots clumping and creaking on the cobbles beneath my second-story window. The town stamped about like Mongols off their horses, like prisoners in ball and chain. Hobnailed boots weighed down even tiny feet, for all ages and both sexes wore them. The usual shouting and arguing of the excitable, the shrieking races added to the clatter.

In Lefkara four fifths of the people are Christian Greeks, one fifth Turkish Moslems, the same proportions as in the island as a whole. But they all speak Greek, even Moslem youngsters playing together. The teaching youth was already waiting to pilot me through an amateur breakfast; then took me to visit families and schools. Olives and carobs are the birthright of all such mountain towns, but Lefkara is famous beyond the island beaches for its lace. Lace-making on cushions at every door, in every stone-paved courtyard; all women-folks above ten years of age are more or less constantly at it. Lefkara is said to be the richest town in Cyprus, thanks to its lace—that is, to its women. Though, to be sure, the men help: they do most of the selling. Many are the men of Lefkara who roam the world, especially the United States, selling the laces their women make in the shaded sides of their quaint courtyards, among huge earthenware water-jars. My

preceptor estimated that there are three hundred men from Lefkara among us; hardly a family in town that does not have a male member in our prosperous land; at least one of them has surely come to your door. An Eden for persuasive philanderers, Lefkara, so the rumor runs. The women wear necklaces of gold coins and show some proofs that Cyprus is not without its faces good to look upon.

Mountain-village little boys and girls were gathering in the stone house and walled garden of the public kindergarten; their teacher would come presently, when she got around to it. Under the British, Cyprus gives more attention to schooling than it might if the wish of most of its inhabitants to rejoin the "motherland," Greece, were granted. The Government appoints the mufti, or muktar, a kind of village commander, and the school committee; the mayor is elected by male adult Greeks paying taxes. The Government furnishes primary schools, the church and the village provide higher schools, if any. English is taught in all of them, though not much is learned, if one is to believe ordinary evidence. Better schools in some ways than ours: all children work in gardens, for instance. Coeducation in the smaller villages. Buildings and equipment are less spendthrift-like than with us, but the best men in town teach. Yet there is no real education, at least of the higher sort, in any of this part of the world, complained a well-traveled and cultured Greek. "They may know several languages, in order to show off, but they have no moral education, no concentration, no serious purpose in life, no sense of responsibility." Stared at from that point of view, perhaps even our own school system leaves much to be desired.

The bootblack asked for an advance and I took the opportunity to mention something I had hesitated to speak of until I was sure of him—that I expected him to take his turns

beneath my knapsack. We were off across a semi-mountainous country, very stony, desert-dry. Luckily I had been foresighted enough to include an army canteen in my equipment. Nothing more shoe-destroying than the hot, dry, stony mountains of central Cyprus through which I tramped that week. It was easy to understand why boots were heavily shod with iron, why horses and mules wear solid iron shoes. Mine, stout when I set out from Lefkara that morning, were . . . But that is getting ahead of the story.

Down into and up out of mountain streams that were not streaming, though we were. Through a constant succession of picturesque stone villages tucked away among the bone-dry hills—Vavla, Lavia, Akapnou, Eptagonia, where lunch was pieced together in a thatched stone shop-and-bar-room, amid two hours of artless conversation through sundry mediums with most of the male population. A delightful childlike quality beneath their not so much uncouth as calloused and sun-and-stone hardened exteriors. All the village noteworthinesses and prides were brought in or pointed out. There was a man who had lived in Italy; another who had brought back from Brazil a dozen words of Portuguese. The hottest hours safely eluded, one game-cock fellow, and most of the gathering, took me to see his great-grandmother. She was said by all to be a hundred and ten, and looked it. Still wearing heavy hobnailed boots, inhabiting a primitive stone hovel off a barnyard; some of us might not care to live so long. Finally the coffee-house circle of Eptagonia lined up for my benefit, and their own, before the church most of them were then engaged in reconstructing, whenever the arrival of a stranger from the outside world did not make work taboo, and the trail swallowed us up again.

We crossed or fell in for a bit with a piece of highway now and then during that twenty-mile day. But in the main the

route was a squirming mountain trail that was hard on the thighs and death on shoes. On through Arakapá, Athrakos, to Kalo Khorió for the night—one of several places in Cyprus that flatter themselves with this name, which means Good Village. In every hamlet worthy a name is a rural constable in a brass arm-band he cannot read. In the larger ones, such as this, are also police in khaki and red fez, Turks as well as Greeks, for the English are nothing if not impartial. Notables sit in the outdoor annex of the village café, which proved in this case to be the earth-covered housetop of a stone dwelling below the one street.

Many such delightful places beneath trees or arbors on breezy hilltops, in the trail-connected interior, are missed by automobile travelers. Villages, streets, houses, floors, everything of stone, hard, uninviting as hobnailed boots or wooden-floored beds. Yet genuine hospitality, frequent unsolicited invitations to enter. One must take Turkish coffee wherever one stops. Handed a chair first of all, one of those home-made chairs with rush seats that thrive wherever the Greek language is spoken. "Si' down!" in the imperative form seems to be the only English all Cyprians know. It is meant as a kindly invitation to indulge in the chief insular pastime. Sitting in the shade is a fine art in Cyprus; it has the air of centuries of training.

The island needs industries; arable land is scarce. The Cypriots do not realize they are lazy and unenterprising, partly for lack of comparisons. A people who have never been tired enough to know they will get over it—men, perhaps I should specify. The women do most of the hard work; up at dawn and at work by five; clump away in their ball-and-chain boots behind a donkey to gather firewood; bring in on their own backs a small barrel of water from some distant source; toil all day, while the men play cards in the café. It is

no unusual sight to find every grown male of a village sitting outdoors across the stony trail-street from the coffee-house, beneath an arbor, all a bright week-day afternoon. The women are as completely cut off from café life as they are solidly tied to hard labor.

There is no visible caste system in these villages, unless it be one of sex. The bootblack hobnobs with the best at the café, slapping the mayor on the back. Dignity and patches go hand in hand in this unwealthy island. Big sturdy men wander about with a home-made bootblackening outfit over a shoulder, men lacking only opportunity, perhaps, who in the United States might become owners of ten-story buildings. Simple, harmless fellows with pirate faces and comic-opera garb give each other flowers, especially roses, and even laborers and countrymen are not ashamed to wear them. An almost childlike ingenuousness is perhaps the outstanding Cypriot characteristic, at least among six hundred and more villages. Like your servants in China, the islanders lose their heads if you scold or make any attempt to hurry them; yet they shout their most ordinary remarks excitedly at one another, like Chinese coolies. Different as they are from us, however, one gets every little while a hint that after all they are of our own race, civilized in the Western sense, compared with the Arabs, with all the mainland opposite.

Most or all the men have mustaches; only the "papa" supports a beard. No doubt it would be presuming upon his clerical rights for a layman to grow one. In these mountain villages the priest is usually some snow-white-haired old failure, possibly even the butt of the café circle he graces as freely as the others. Now and then he goes and cuts wood in the near-by hills, labors in his vineyard (material, not spiritual), and at similar unapostolic tasks, tucking up his long sun-faded, much patched black gown, perhaps even

his beard, some not too undignified substitute for his cumbersome ecclesiastical stovepipe head-gear covering his matted hair twisted together in a Psyche knot. Not much else for him to do; just kept on hand for baptisms, marriages, funerals, like a spare coffin or a silver font-basin. Naïvely pleased at being photographed, the Cypriots, so disappointed if you do not snap-shot them that you must let every one in sight into the picture or cover your tracks with some simple form of deception. They bring out portraits of harder-faced relatives, in frock-coats and corresponding garb (sometimes obviously rented for the occasion), bearing the imprint of some photographer in Egypt, Syria, the Belgian Congo, of North or South America.

The village police sergeant in fez and khaki led me to the absent muktar's house, established me in the stone-box upper story, containing the usual wooden bed. He was so widely traveled that he knew without prompting I should like not only water but a fresh towel; saw to it that the muktar's wife furnished me also a scanty supper, after which came the task of making notes by weak candle-light in a more and more penetrating mountain-night chill. Only in the morning did I discover that the muktar's wife, far from keeping careful watch over me from the floor below, spent the night with a neighbor lest she compromise her reputation. Yet the official guest quarters and the personal domain of the village chief were connected only by an outside stairway in plain sight of half the town.

An insufficient breakfast with difficulty, the sergeant being off early on a man-hunt. A murder now and then even among these simple villagers, it seems. Then three hours of walking, the same hard going as the day before, though at first the weather was only a few degrees above delightful. Here and there a woman grubbing at a hillside with a hoe as clumsy

as the boots that disappeared among the folds of her heavy skirt. Now and then a man working, too, but at the somewhat easier tasks, such as guiding a plow. Some strange plow-fellows are to be seen among the hills of Cyprus, as well as the Biblical, all-wood, one-handled plow, and Turkish influence in the plowman's garb.

Mid-morning found us entering Aghios Mamas (pronounced "Ay' Mamá") which is Greek for "Holy Mama"; and the road into it justified the name. Almost sand-dunes all about; the town itself solid rock, with vineyards behind it to the tops of the sandy mountains. Many vineyards, in fact, on the way from Lefkara, scattered small vines at this season, among rocks and unproductive bushes, climbing to the tops of hills. School keeps half a day on Saturday in Cyprus, but there was none that morning in Aghios Mamas, because "the teacher had to go away and tend his vineyards."

My bootblack left me there, after the mid-morning meal, since the bargain was that I should consider myself duly delivered when he had piloted me to the highway from Limassol to the top of the island. As a matter of fact I did not strike the road until a couple of hot and sandy miles farther, and at that the overland trip proved much shorter than it had been when the bargain was being struck in Lefkara. Not far along the highway, however, I was picked up by a Ford filled with bread for the asbestos mines at Amiandos.

CHAPTER IV

OVER THE TOP

ON the way up to Aghios Mamas we had passed beneath a cableway carrying a constant succession of iron buckets from the top of the island to the coast—which gave me an idea. Near the top of Cyprus, high up on Troodos, the Cyprian Mount Olympus, is one of the world's greatest asbestos mines. Seen even from afar off it was a blotch on the landscape; from only a few miles below, the dust rising from it suggested an artillery battle. Climb, climb, climb, as if we hoped to attain the very summit of Troodos. Impossible to believe that this decrepit Ford could ever reach those dust-swirling heights, already noisy, in the sky above. Yet it did, after setting me down across the canyon, barely a mile away, for a photograph and a more leisurely approach. Still an almost steep road, beneath a new one being dug even higher up, for projected new staff houses. Men and women were tossing ton-sized boulders down the mountainside, across the main road, so that my walk was made engrossing by the constant dodging of sudden death.

Reminders of the mines of Mexico and Peru about the establishment. Many laborers hanging about a series of strictly utilitarian offices, mainly of wood. For all his speech and manner, the manager was not really English, so he quickly gave me permission to do what I had hoped to be able to do. But first I must sign a waiver absolving the company in case anything happened. Nothing ever had, to me, at

least as far back as I could remember ; and nothing had here at Amiandos since 1905, the manager said—later I found he was speaking of visitors, not employees. He shut up his desk and took me over the mine himself, first dropping to the bottom of it in a Fiat roadster.

The mine was opened in 1905 ; had four thousand employees now, eighteen of them Europeans. Last year it had produced 6400 tons ; would double that this year ; probably reach 20,000 tons next year—out of 180,000 tons annually in all the world. Canada is the chief competitor. The English limited company holding the asbestos concession for the whole island—or was it only for all this region?—had been steadily enlarging the plant. Men and women work in perfect equality in shoveling the asbestos-impregnated hillsides into the iron cars that carry them off to the refining machines. The same wages ; just as handy with the shovel ; apparently just as hardy, heavy boots and all. Digging down sheer mountainsides in terraces and tossing the debris aside, like burglars looting for valuables, who leave the house a wreck. Ordinarily there is six or seven percent of asbestos in the stuff dug out of these hillsides, a silky floss that has probably been there since the world cooled. Rub a handful of earth, and fibers like damp cotton, grayer in color, become conspicuous. Also there are solid veins of asbestos, as much as two inches thick, the fibers longer than those of Canada, elastic yet brittle stuff, in its crude state, heavy as rock. Changes of temperature do not even expand or contract it.

Asbestos derives from a Greek word meaning inextinguishable, it seems ; and it has become much more necessary to us than we realize. Long ago man learned to weave cloth from these threads of rock. Scores of everyday things about us depend on asbestos—the lining of automobile brakes, for instance. Fire-fighters must have asbestos armor and tools ;

whole fireproof houses have been built of it. Some think the three men who survived Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace wore asbestos clothing. The Romans made asbestos shrouds, wrapped the corpses of their nobles and the financially triumphant in them, not, evidently, from any fundamentalist notion of the after-world, but that their ashes might be preserved after cremation. Queer what some people wish to keep.

It is nearly all piece-work at Amiandos, and work never stops. There are electric lights at night even for the diggers. Rocks are thrown out, and the rest sent to the crushers. Shakers sort it; suction picks it up. Dust is plentiful in it, but condensers remove most of that, so there is barely one percent of it in the stuff as shipped. Automatically weighed and bagged in hundred-pound lots, which sturdy girls with in some instances rather sweet faces toss about as if the sacks were filled with feathers, it is ready to go forth into the world and do its duty.

All the asbestos from Amiandos goes down to the port of Limassol on the "ropewalk," in cable-riding iron buckets or on open platforms, which bring back with them oil for the machinery and similar supplies for the mines. Many also return empty, though two-wheeled carts and decrepit Fords are forever toiling upward with stock for the stores and for private sale or use. An open platform or iron bucket will carry eight hundred pounds without complaint, so I and my baggage, totaling barely two hundred, were nothing; and there was no danger whatever, especially as I had signed a release. You can sit on an open platform and dangle your feet over space, if you like, as do most employees who are used to aerial riding; but if you fall asleep it may be quite a drop. Personally I preferred to cramp into one of the buckets, not unlike a short bathtub. In that I was shoved off into space

with the blessing of all those at the pushing-off place, and a final warning to duck my head, if I wished to keep it, at every support tower.

That three-hour ride over several mountain ranges, in one of the iron buckets in which the asbestos of Amiandos sets forth on its journey to all parts of the world, was by no means the least interesting trip I have ever made. The man who surveyed the line tells me that it is $18\frac{3}{4}$ miles long; the automobile road between the same goals is 47. He tells me also that the aerial cableway is at least 600 feet high in places. Even in the face of such an authority I am prepared to swear that in some of the valleys between the several ranges it crosses, the "ropewalk" certainly looks as many thousand feet above terra firma, and feels many times that. Yet this quickly became my favorite means of locomotion. It beats walking; it is much less dangerous than automobiling, particularly on such roads as that on which I had bread-Forded up to the mines, less so, in fact, than riding an airplane, an express-train, and no more so than patronizing an elevator in a high building. Statistics will bear me out. Also it is more comfortable than an airplane: one can read, write, smoke one's pipe, might even easily talk were there room for a companion. There is that, too, if it is one you would care to hold on your lap for a protracted period. No uproar, little noise of any kind, except the periodical "zzzmmm" of passing a supporting steel tower urgently inviting you to duck your head. Open air; the wide world about you; not a hint of dust; goggles quite unnecessary; no air bumps; no distressing deafness for hours afterward. To be sure, it makes no pretense to rivaling the airplane in speed; but you have just that much better view of the country.

It is a half-arid country, yet beautiful. Pines, cypresses, a tree-bush with a red trunk that looks as if it had been var-

nished. Terraced fields, which you have never before seen from such a vantage-point. Extraordinarily winding, whitish roads far below; blue streams in rock gorges so small that they seem mere pencil marks. Towns like dots on the landscape, a few with red roofs, mostly flat and yellow. Glimpses of the Mediterranean whenever you rise high enough, in passing over range after range; miles of sagging cable between them. There were very few people in the fields; mostly grape-vines and bushes; perhaps there are more toilers at other seasons. A man working in a terraced patch that looked just the size of a door-mat. Flying birds far below; rocky torrent beds lost in shadow. Looking back upon Troodos, surrounded by lesser ranges, its top now black in clouds, now clear, is perhaps the most splendid vista of all.

There are two stations at the tops of ridges along the way, where you can get off and stretch your legs, and make the acquaintance of human beings again, even if you cannot talk to them. They shove you off once more whenever you give the word. Only one fellow-traveler that afternoon, a workman oiling along the way, who steps from moving platform to steel towers and back to another as nonchalantly as a plane jumper from fuselage to wing. The company is often troubled with cableway hoboos. Just now they were rare. Not long before, an effective cure for stealing rides had been tried; the engines were stopped and a man on an open platform hung all one Saturday night over the deepest valley. Next time, the manager threatens, whoever it is will remain there from Saturday to Monday. Employees now and then, once or twice an invited passenger, have been late to dinner, thanks to some necessary adjustment to the machinery.

The trip verges on the monotonous after the second station; the last third of the ride is an anticlimax. For dramatic purposes it would be better to go up than to come down.



A street of Nicosia, hampered by the tomb of a
Mohammedan holy man



A lace-maker of Lefkara



Rare is the woman of Lefkara who is not a lace-maker



The author about to be shoved off into space in an asbestos-mine bucket

You get so low you can pick leaves off the tops of the trees, talk with people in the fields, before you land at last at the edge of the sea, like a bag of asbestos, descend a ladder, and walk into Limassol.

Hot enough for asbestos clothing, this south-shore town, third and last modern port and second city of the island, with nearly twelve thousand inhabitants. All stone buildings, except the tile roofs, as in most of Cyprus. Hard and dusty, contrasting sharply with the densely blue sea that languidly laps the piles supporting a mile or more of buildings along it. Some negroes; the Turks brought black slaves. The Hotel Olympus is nothing to awaken pride among the ancient gods; but it can manage a hot tin-tub bath in your room upon due insistence. There is a mosque, a well-built Turkish school (with a Sunday session) out in the veiled section of town. But the ornate Greek church in the center is larger and much more populated, at least on the Christian Sabbath. Silver-reinforced ikons, of course, and no seats; every one stands. You hold your hands clasped together before you, I was informed, not behind, with a kodak swinging from them.

In Cyprus, Sunday is like a Catholic day of rest; therefore no automobile travel unless you hire a car. A man offered to take me all the way around the island to Famagusta for six guineas. I told him I would not give six guineas for the whole island, for my purposes. I do not like guineas, anyway; the pound is bad enough. Besides, like the Chinese tael, the guinea is intangible; and such mind as I have is tangible if nothing else. Nothing left, therefore, but to lose a day or set out on foot. A lost fortune can sometimes be recovered; a lost day, never. I girded up my loins and strode forth.

It was a fine road for automobiles, and correspondingly bad for pedestrians. Luckily, only seven hard, sweaty miles lay behind me before I was picked up by the same Ford

bread-wagon, again on its way to Amiandos. Fortunate that bread must be had even on Sunday. The unwrapped loaves completely filled the car behind the driver; two passengers were already packed in beside him. But there is always room for one more in the Near East, even where drastic laws prevail. I rode thirteen miles, sitting half in half out of the snorting contraption; was profusely thanked for another two shillings when I dropped off at the junction of the branch highway to Pedoulas.

Recent rains in the hills had made this region a delightful contrast to the sweltering, dusty coast so plainly in sight below. A cool, winding, mountainous tramp into the rain-freshened evening brought me to a bucolic mountain village called Perapedhi. There were crude though sufficient accommodations—a hard but clean bed, homespun sheets, a tiny lamp, a waterfall for music; and for the inner man fried eggs ad lib., strips of cold salt meat, delicious dark-brown peasant's bread, golden wine of Cyprus; and I had only to refuse the ubiquitous Turkish demi-tasse. Apple-trees were in fragrant blossom at Perapedhi, at Padromonos and Pedoulas, and there were big cherries that would be ripe before the end of May.

An hour's climb at dawn brought me to Platres, where coffee with milk was to be had, this being a summer resort town acquainted with such luxuries. I left my knapsack—which turned out not to be wise—and took an ever more woodsy road steeply upward. Beautiful old pine-trees increased in size and number. Great evergreen-filled depths, now on one hand, now on the other, were an incredible contradiction of the here and there still visible coast. Two, perhaps three, hours of climbing—what does time matter in such surroundings?—brought me to the summer government

offices amid magnificent pine forests. But not even the caretaker was on hand. Nearly an hour higher still was a great summer colony, not yet inhabited. A good highway even here, which goes down on the Amiandos side. One could hear the whistle, see the dust, almost catch the roar of the asbestos-threshing machinery. Yet the Mediterranean was so near that summer residents may sit in their mountain retreats and watch their houses down in Limassol.

I found my way through a thinning forest to the rocky top of Troodos, of all Cyprus. Pages would be needed to do justice to the view. Though it was already early May and most of Cyprus too hot for comfortable tramping, there were still patches of snow twenty feet across and a foot or more deep on the northern side of its culminating point. A sea-breeze blew that would have yielded its possessor a fortune down below, where it all but carried me.

Those of us who set our own course must suffer now and then for eschewing the commonplace. I was sure a short-cut could be made down to the seat of the summer Government. I lived to regret my impetuosity, as so often before and since. The rocky summit grew more and more impassable. Within half an hour I was risking my life down sheer rock precipices beside a mountain stream that was all waterfalls.

Why make a long story of it? When at length, torn and mildly bleeding, I came upon a trail, it was apparently on the wrong side of the mountain. That would have mattered less if I had not unwisely left my knapsack behind. The trail wound half-way around the abode of the ancient gods, over ridge after ridge, through even more splendid, wet, evergreen forests. One group of buildings along the way, like an aery of hermits, which disappeared completely after one glimpse of them far above and ahead. An uncouth woods-

man, with a boy and a donkey, was the only possible source of inquiry; and we found no common denominator of language.

But at last the highway appeared again, just below the empty government buildings; and at the same moment came a sudden drenching rain, laden with hailstones bigger than hazlenuts. Naturally, since it was the first time I had left my rain-coat behind. I huddled against the trunk of a huge pine. As well stand under the eaves. An automobile passed; but the three men in it were evidently only Englishmen. There was nothing left but to splash and wade for a long hour down a highway that had become a broad rivulet, protecting myself as best I could from the machine-gun hail of ice bullets.

The coffee-house where I had made my initial mistake—that day—had a mud-den annex in which I was able to change, spreading my wet garments indelicately over most of the rush-bottomed chairs in the again sun-scorched morning rendezvous of the male population. But if dinner was more than late, it was adequate. Food seemed the most absurd of vices all the rest of the day. Barely could I drag one foot after the other; the meal alone would have been burden enough, without the hard morning behind me, the water-weighted load in my knapsack, the steeply mounting highway.

It was a good road, but without traffic, which brought me at sunset to the famous old monastery of Trooditisa. I had, it seemed, been within a mile of this on my descent from the summit. My first Greek monastery lodging was a miserable old stone-and-wooden cluster of buildings about a courtyard resembling a sheep-pen; and it had been flooded out by the hailstone deluge. The flood had carried off nearly all the food stores; it would have been a godsend if it had also washed away the guest-rooms in the second story. So incred-

ible had been the disaster, that the abbot himself had girded up his gown and plunged into the flood, rescuing with his own holy hands anything that did not elude him. The receding waters had left the church two inches deep in mud. Not that this greatly decreased its attractions; rather the contrary, since now they would be compelled at least to clean it out.

A man of parts, recently expelled from the home he and his ancestors had maintained for ten generations in Asiatic Turkey, was week-ending in this sacred spot. Luckily, for the abbot not only spoke nothing except Greek but had been flooded out of most of his knowledge of that. Three or four mightily bearded monks constitute his personnel. An unclean long-haired boy in ragged soap-abhorring khaki, and as bovine a man in a black beard and correspondingly unprepossessing garb did the manual-labor act—when it was unavoidable. Of the alleged dinner set before us, nothing need be said except to thank fortune again for the late and lasting one at Platres. Cobwebs festooned the incredibly dirty mud rooms in which the inmates exist from youth to death.

It was hard to believe that a place easily looking down upon the warm Mediterranean and sweltering Limassol could be so cold. But Trooditisa is not only 4560 feet high but is backed and half surrounded by the ever wet, heavily wooded mountain. A frigid silvery moon gazed in upon us; a nightingale sang; the tiny flickering candle spared me the sight of most of the iniquities of the guest-room, and in spite of blankets that should have been able to walk alone it was dawn an instant after I pulled them over me.

The English-speaking—or was it French?—Levantine and I climbed higher still in the cool fresh morning, breakfastless, as seemed to be the Greek, or at least the monasterial, custom. Partridges and quail whirled up out of the forest wall along the way. Two hours brought us to the summit; and just be-

yond, the torrent of the day before had torn a great gash in the mountainside and taken a piece of the road with it, leaving this route across the island as useless to, wheeled traffic as if it had never been built.

There were wonderful views on the descent, mainly by short-cuts, to a civilized breakfast at Pedoulas. People come here even from Egypt in the summer; Rumania's dowager queen and super publicity agent was soon expected. I failed to hire a mule, since it would have taken the owner all morning to catch him, not to mention the emergency price demanded. A stout pair of legs is a splendid protection against extortion. But the Levantine withdrew his impetuous promise to walk to Kykkou with me; and though we had seen the imposing bulk of it on the crest of an opposite range on our way down to Pedoulas, he joined the rest of the town in insisting that I could never get there without a guide.

Yet I did, after three of the hottest, stiffest hours, down through the bone-dry bowels of the earth, I have ever known since my Andean days. Kykkou owns much land. It maintains a huge "office" in Nicosia, where I had already seen one of its monks, under an umbrella against the blazing sunshine, superintending the harvest-time labors of all the men and women of a Kykkou-owned village. It owns modern threshing-machines, as well as the Cyprus variety; hence it was no surprise to find it a millionaire's retreat compared with poverty-stricken, mud-flooded Trooditisa.

The screen wall shutting off the Greek church proper from the altar and holy of holies is nowhere more ornate with silver-protected images than in Kykkou Monastery. Nor are other artistic or merely expensive things of interest lacking within the great stone pile that hangs on the brink of that bottomless, Hadean ravine. But I fear the walk exaggerated pleasures of the table and the cup, amid courteous monks

not without a hint of culture, rather obliterated my appreciation of many a detail the ecclesiastophile—if the word be permitted—would have raved over.

A Cypriot family from Salisbury, North Carolina, saved me twenty-seven miles of hard, dusty walking and a day's time by arguing the chauffeur of their hired Chevrolet into admitting me to the front seat in spite of the law. What might easily have happened a score of times on that mile-high descent by an often precipice-clinging road did not happen at all, and long before sunset I was gladly set down at the shore end of the American mines of Scouriotisa, where the first fellow-countryman I found replied to my greeting with, "Oh, yes, I met you in Bolivia in nineteen-thirteen."

Scouriotisa, unless I am even more ignorant of Greek than I admit, means rust. Hence the name of the place marked by a big hill of red tailings, probably dumped by the Phœnicians, across the bare hillside, up at the mine itself. The black dump near it is credited to the Romans. To-day a company with headquarters in Los Angeles continues to extract sulphur pyrites, copper, and some iron from the rocky hills. The iron, they will tell you, nets them nothing, since the buyers in Europe extract it, a mere by-product of the pyrites and copper. A dozen or more Americans of both sexes live at Scouriotisa, in that isolated comfort common to such establishments the world over. White, well-spaced cottages house most of the Cypriot employees. On closer inspection these prove to be merely now and then whitewashed mud dens without floors. But so superior are they to the home of many a native, that one hears far and wide of their advantages. Between them and the aristocratic American section runs the only railway in Cyprus, from a little farther on to the capital. I am sorry to say I never rode on it; also glad, for as railroads go it is not a model of speed or comfort.

From the top of the highest hill at Scouriotisa one can see the Taurus Mountains in Turkey, and all those of Cyprus—which is believed to have taken its name from the copper mined here—Troodos, the Kyrenia range, the whole length and breadth of the plain of Nicosia; the Mediterranean too, of course, and towns among trees scattered far away in almost every direction, green contrasts to the half-arid bulk of the island.

Tunnels are run under the ore body, which is solid stuff. Now and then one of those old flat earthenware lamps that testify to the decadence of the later Roman Empire are dug up. Used by miners as well as students and men about town? Some of them are as obscene as the postals that were sometimes found on German prisoners. As shovelers the women are the best men on the job at Scouriotisa. The company would like to let them work even underground, but there are far too many lovers' nooks. Puritanism in its most American meaning does not flourish in Cyprus, they say. Of eighteen men in a certain village, seventeen were ready to come and work in the mines, but the eighteenth would not; so the others would not either, saying they could not trust their wives as long as a man was left at home.

But we are verging on the censorious; and the good shoes in which I left Lefkara were sadly in need of surgical attention. Besides, I had to hurry back to Famagusta, for the steamer calls there only once a week.

CHAPTER V

GRECIAN THRACE

THERE was a happy time, not long after the World War, when Greece believed that one of her most ardent dreams—to become the possessor of Constantinople—was to come true. All Thrace had been tentatively given to her. But Constantine was recalled to the throne by a plebiscite, and Venizelos defeated; France was angered; feared, too, that England would control the straits. So she supported the Turks in their demand that a little slice of Europe, including not only their beloved Stamboul but Adrianople, be given back to them, and insisted that the Greeks be ordered out of Adrianople even before the treaty was signed.

Thus the express from the Bosphorus to Prague and Vienna, to Berlin and Paris, rambles all day through Turkish territory, though European Turkey has shrunk from an empire that once included all Greece and much more to a strip of land no larger than Massachusetts. Wise the traveler who continues with it, instead of turning aside at the frontier station of Kuleli Burgas, now called Pythion, to visit shrunken Adrianople. For to escape from that weed-grown city of the past into Greece is no simple matter. The train from down out of Bulgaria passes there—or near there—only in the night; and Pythion is a dreary place in which to be marooned fourteen long and hungry hours. Nor would the Greek policeman who had pocketed my passport return it so that I could at least relieve the monotony by walking on.

It was certainly the longest day of the year, and that not merely by the calendar.

But we were off at last, just as the sun went down, crawling along at the same funereal pace as in Turkey. One result was that I had to hang about Dédéagatch, now officially known as Alexandropole, for four hours in the middle of the night, just long enough to be uncomfortable and not long enough to make it worth while to pay for a bed.

But at least I felt as if I were back in my own world, among my own people, after months of wandering in Moslem lands. The Greeks have their faults, but they are a pleasant people compared with the surly Turks of to-day. The traveler must, to be sure, report to the police in the first Greek town he embellishes with his presence. A *carte d'identité* is required of those who remain in the country thirty days. But the rule is not enforced with that strictness approaching stupidity which prevails in Turkey; the Greek right to exist is partly in French; the police often can—and, what is more, are willing to—speak a little French, sometimes even a bit of English; and unlike those of Turkey they are not ashamed to be civil and helpful, trying their best to get the gist of your remarks.

If it happens to be obviously inconvenient to apply for your identity card on the way there, Athens will do. Once you have it, there is no more bother, for though there are certain places in which, the document in question informs you in a legible language, you are expected to report if you remain more than twenty-four hours, the police take the trouble of looking you up, and you are not shot at sunrise even if you fail to connect with them.

The carriage ride—if you must be so sybaritic—from one station to another in Alexandropole discloses right-angled earth-paved streets between low featureless homes, the coffee-

houses by no means abandoned even in the middle of the night. The tri-weekly Salonika express leaves on the government railways from there to Athens at four; dawn discloses a rather dreary country not long afterward. Plenty of fezes still in Thrace, unlike modern Turkey, some veils, and here and there a mosque. For in return for permitting Christians established there by 1918 to remain in Constantinople and vicinity, Turks were allowed to remain in eastern Thrace, under Greek rule. Even from the train it was evident that this was an easy-going, coffee-drinking, shade-sitting region of bad roads—though some efforts were being made to improve it in that last respect—a bare, stony, almost treeless land of insufficient water, so dry and sun-baked that one might have suspected rain had never fallen upon it. Still, it was a more fertile, more arable land than Anatolia—Asiatic Turkey. Very few travelers leave a place with the same impression of it with which they came. Personally, I find my imagined picture nearly always far indeed from the true one; and many of the questions asked me suggest that most people visualize as falsely. Certainly I was already finding Greece very different from what I had more or less subconsciously pictured it.

Any of the several towns scattered along or within reach of the government railway through Thrace tells approximately the same story. I chose Xanthi, dropping off the soi-disant express still so early in the morning that the fellow-countrymen I had been invited to visit there were not yet awake. Xanthi, Drama its next-door neighbor, virtually all the small cities of Thrace have but one reason to be: tobacco. Because the conditions are just right—a calcareous soil with few stones, mountains shielding it from the north and the Sea of Marmara warming it on the south and giving the air just the moisture needed—this region produces the finest, or

at least the most expensive, tobacco in the world. Macedonia has the same climate, but it cannot raise the same tobacco.

Tobacco occupies in one form or another ninety percent of the people of Thrace. It drives out wheat and its under-studies, so that the food problem is always acute. Basma, with its small oval leaves hardly bigger than those of the willow, of thin edge and delicate veins, like an aristocratic hand, is famous among tobacco men the world over; and the best of all is that grown about Xanthi. Little knolls are utilized as seed-beds; the plains and valleys far and wide, to the foot of the rocky, scrub-wooded mountains never very far away to the north, were velvety-green with the maturing plants. It is a tiny leaf compared with its great American ancestor, and by just that much superior to it. A good small-leaf crop is worth from \$300 to \$350 an acre. But it requires intensive cultivation such as America does not know; incessant care, especially in the matter of watering. Hail, rain at the wrong time or in unusual quantity, any one of a score of very possible mishaps may ruin the crop. Then every leaf must be threaded with a big needle, all members of the family helping. All over Thrace and Macedonia, in many parts of Greece proper, festoons of tobacco leaves hung out to dry form sagging brown mats. Basma goes to the buyers at last in pressed packages suggestive of baled hay, each leaf just so; no wonder, then, that peasants even about Xanthi sometimes revolt and plant hardier, less care-demanding tobacco.

Its three American tobacco "factories" are by far the most imposing establishments in Xanthi. They really do not manufacture anything; their job is to "manipulate" the tobacco on its way from the fields to the United States. The tobaccos of Thrace and Macedonia are always subjected to a process which gives them "character, their distinctive perfume, taste, and color." This involves a series of delicate operations,

including careful sorting and resorting of leaves, classification of the various qualities, inspection of bales to prevent fermentation, even careful stowing.

The tobacco comes to the "factories" in bales wrapped in a goat's-hair shield, each bunch of leaves in a cartouche the size of a butternut and of much the same shape. It is handled leaf by leaf, several times over, kept for months, finally packed down into forty-pound bales, also wrapped in goatskin, to be at last shipped, direct from Dédéagatch, to the United States. It pays a 17½ percent export duty to Greece and thirty-five cents a pound, irrespective of quality, for admission to our own country. Since this last expense is the most serious of all, it is good business to send only the best.

Being by nature skeptical, I am repelled rather than attracted by the blatant propaganda for this, that, and the other cigarette which defaces our fair land. Yet in Xanthi it was astonishing to see what pains are taken for the benefit of the American cigarette-smoker. The first eight qualities of the tobacco produced in Thrace go to the United States; the next several grades (including moldy, broken, and otherwise undesirable leaves) go to Germany, mainly; what is left goes to the Greeks themselves, by way of the government tobacco monopoly's alleged cigarettes. At that, I cannot taste any great difference between an American and a Greek cigarette, nor rave over those specially made in the Xanthi "factories" of the best selected tobacco, for the use of the American managers and their friends. But then, a cigarette has always been to me an absurd form of tobacco; those whose perceptive faculties in this matter are keener say there is a whole wide world of difference.

The workers of Xanthi, Greek men and women and Turkish men, get from \$1.00 to \$1.20 a day. They work from seven to eleven and from two to five. They are considered

lazy by the American managers—who are always, of course, from Virginia or the Carolinas. England also has some buyers on the ground. Most of the workers squat tailor-fashion at their tasks, a woman before each man or pair of men, who are baling, to pick up scraps, sort the leaves, and the like. It would be deadly monotonous work to live people; most of these are so languid with malaria and Orientalism that they do not seem to mind. Yet they have energy enough for a serious altercation now and then—almost always outside the “factories”—and for frequent revolt against the monotony of monogamy.

In 1925, Greece produced 66,000,000 kilograms of tobacco (about three times that of 1922, thanks largely to refugees from Turkey). But that meant overproduction, and prices fell. The best Thracian tobacco was once worth from \$5.00 to \$7.00 an oka ($2\frac{3}{4}$ pounds); now the same amount sold for \$1.00. (Have our smokers, by the way, noticed the corresponding drop in price in the United States?) Bulgarian and Turkish competition has become serious; on the other hand, the drastic law designed to uphold the reputation of the world's best tobacco region has been changed, so that the careful preparation once obligatory before exporting is no longer necessary.

This, it seems, is due to the force of circumstances rather than to the Greeks—or perhaps we should still say Thracians—themselves. The world's production of tobacco is mainly under the direct control of a powerful combine, which seeks to regulate the quantity and quality grown in all countries (I am quoting from an official report to the League of Nations) in order gradually to make poorer tobacco satisfy the customer without his being aware of the depreciation; and as to Greece, eventually to destroy the reputation of “Macedonian” tobacco, so as to be no longer forced to pay higher

prices for it. Some of the growers in Thrace also advocate cheaper production and preparation, as I have already hinted. Others insist that China and the United States can always produce ordinary tobacco more cheaply, and that the world combine will always be compelled to use some of the first class.

Smoking, as I am not alone in knowing from experience, is little pleasure wherever a government tobacco monopoly exists. But Greece, the home of the world's finest tobacco, probably leads the world in the abominable stuff it consumes under that name. Nothing but cigarettes are legally produced in the country, and every connoisseur of that ridiculous form of the weed will tell you that as a smoke corn silk is infinitely preferable to the products of the Greek tobacco monopoly. I have already mentioned the unselfish custom of sending all but the last and lowest grade of tobacco to other lands. From the offal left, the monopoly makes, at a cost of certainly never more than three drachmas a box, cigarettes that sell for from ten to twenty-five drachmas, depending on the color of the label.

Any other form of tobacco costs its weight in gold. It is of no use to carry a pipe, for smoking tobacco is contraband and little of it is to be had even if you win the confidence of those who possess it. Legally you cannot even roll your own. The peasants get on fairly well, but the rest of us are in sad straits. Once I found three packages of very poor smoking tobacco at a street booth in Salonika, and evidently wore my mask of confidence that day. In Crete I tried in my pipe the coarse tombak used in the water-pipe, but resold what was left, after squandering several boxes of government monopoly matches in a vain effort to ignite it. It was easy to find a purchaser. In fact, it was thoughtless of me not to have put it up at auction, out of sight of the police and the ubiquitous

spotters and stool-pigeons attached to the tobacco monopoly. There are a few dejected hubble-bubbles left in Greece, along with many other reminders of Turkish rule. One feels that there would be many more if tobacco could be had for them.

English smoking tobacco in Greece is only for the very wealthy; the ordinary American fifteen-cent tins alleged not to bite the tongue and to possess other extraordinary virtues, cost at least a dollar a tin in those rare shops in Athens and the one or two other cities where they can sometimes be found. Cigars, from abroad, must be wrapped two at a time in stamped government paper, and sold at prohibitive prices. In short, the wise man, not to say woman, gives up smoking entirely for the duration of his Grecian sojourn, just as law-respecting and sapient persons in the United States give up drinking, until they get out of the country again.

If you bring cigars in with you, the duty is at least twice what the cigars cost you in the United States, our stamp tax included. Yes, there are ways of avoiding this: I more or less innocently slipped in a two- or three-weeks' supply myself through one such loophole. But as the weeks wore on, even my normally scanty indulgence tapered down to three, two, a single cigar a day, then gradually and spasmodically to nothing, by way of a brief sojourn with its ill-tasting analogy, the Greek cigarette.

And thereby, though it is getting far ahead of the story, hangs an anecdote or something of the sort worth the telling out of place because of the light it sheds on Greek character, or on Greek opinion of American character. The artistic companion who will presently join us had, at my behest, brought me a meager hundred cigars of my favorite Nassau Street brand—or price. But he could not smuggle a tooth-brush through the most careless customs system in the



In the tobacco fields of Thrace



Sorting tobacco in a Xanthi "factory"



Unloading Thracian tobacco in Xanthi

world; before this journey is over I shall be paying him other high compliments. The result was that only the sixteen or so of precious brown rolls left in the box of twenty-five which I opened for the purpose of blinding tobacco-hungry officials reached the street with me. The other three boxes were tearfully and fearfully left behind in the customs warehouse, with no other protection than a stout wrapping of wire secured with a lead seal.

No, you pessimists are entirely wrong. We, too, were astonished during our journey at how often the Greek reputation for improbity was given the lie. Not only were the three boxes still there, the full quota of their contents intact, when I petitioned six weeks later for the boon of being allowed to consume them on my way home; there was not even evidence of any attempt accidentally to break the seal or bite off a wire, despite a multitude of depressing prophecies. The process of recovering them was, naturally, a long and perspiring story; but that we can dismiss, as beside the point. What I am attempting to convey is the incredibly Greek fact that the upshot of all this was that the cigars were handed to me by order of the highest official available, and I was courteously beckoned to take my departure.

"But," I protested, "I still have to go up to Athens, get my baggage, take leave of my cigar-hungry friends, take a Greek boat to Patras, temptation staring upon me from every side. Now, if you could put these in charge of the captain, or of some customs official, and have him hand them to me when I set foot on the steamer for home . . ."

But the chief official in sight merely smiled and waved again courteously toward the open side of the building. Though he did not say so in words, there was as plainly written on his mobile Latin-Oriental countenance as it could

have been on a bill-board the statement that he had no fears where an American (and no doubt he would have ranked an Englishman in the same category) was concerned.

"Well, at least . . ." I rebutted, preparing to open one of the boxes.

"Merci . . . thank you," he replied, which might have meant quite the contrary, but for that confirmation of such a statement one learns in time to read on the face of the dissembling races, peering through the perhaps unconscious admission that in common with most tobacco-monopolized Greeks, he would give anything short of his honor or good money for a genuine cigar, "thank you, but it is not allowed."

Yet there are those who say—nay, rumors are numerous and persistent—that the customs officials of Greece, the Greeks in general, are . . . But, after all, what is this simple tale of a summer's journeying but a gathering of testimony in this very matter? And it would be presumptive to sum up before the jury has heard all the available witnesses.

A reputation to be upheld is a troublesome possession. Naturally I could neither give to friends nor sell to importuning Greeks the precious things under my arm, after having been trusted in that way. But surely it would not have been a mortal sin, had I but known in time, to have falsely hastened the hour of my departure from Greece and spared myself that last tobaccoless fortnight, instead of departing with cigars enough to last me a week or more beyond the arrival in my native, cigar-supplied land.

Tobacco, I suppose, is the dreadful, soul-destroying stuff the few abstaining old ladies left would have us believe. Yet . . . in a certain city in Thrace live five Americans. Two of them are wives and do not count in this matter, whatever their standing in their own field. Two are men managing tobacco "factories," who buy and prepare and ship tobacco

for the principal American branches of the world's tobacco trust. The fifth resident is the woman nurse at the head of the American Woman's Hospital. She has been there much longer than the others; personally I am still very grateful for her presence, though that is a private matter; she is considered and considers herself an altruistic person, a missionary, a charity worker for the good of her fellow-men; and no one works harder or more earnestly and self-sacrificingly, more efficiently, considering the means at her hand.

Yet this avowed charity worker does not do one fortieth as much for the people of that district of Thrace as do the two admittedly unaltruistic tobacco men, or the companies they represent, by providing work in hygienic factories to thousands of men and women. Self-reliance is not weakened here, while the woman at the hospital saves largely the discards, prolongs the lives of unhappy wretches whom in many cases it would be better, both for themselves and for society, not to have saved. How many enigmas beset us on our brief jaunt through the semiconsciousness we call life.

At the first "express" station beyond Xanthi the tobacco plain ends. Comes another about Drama, besides some wheat, just ripening. All fallow fields there were covered with recruits going awkwardly through various first evolutions. Cavalla, down in its oven-like hollow by the sea, once very Turk, is now prosperous with tobacco also; but it is far from the railroad. Many tunnels and some mildly striking scenery, as this winds along the Mesta (Nestos) or Kara Su River dividing Thrace from Macedonia. Gray rock cliffs; a good piece of engineering for Turks, though a fellow-passenger tells me the engineers were Greeks—Germans, more likely. The Turks built the line far from the sea all the way, to be as safe as possible from the Greeks or other enemies who might destroy it; yet, for all their pains, they have now

lost it entirely. The result is that instead of going directly to Salonika the trains wander around more than half a circle whose diameter can be covered in a third the time by those willing to endure the trip by automobile.

This gorge of the Kara Su must be a great sight in the rainy season, for built out over the railway are many iron-supported stone chutes for mountain streams, well above the edge of the river, like gargoyle spouts on European churches. Most of the afternoon across Macedonia was close along the base of mountains, green and cloud-covered, in double contrast to the hot dry plains about us. Yet this was plainly rich farming land. Considerable wheat, largely in shocks already; peasants, mostly women, in picturesque old costumes, including a dark-red skirt with a bibbed apron, stood like statues, leaning on their hoes, always in groups, as the train passed.

With the exchange of populations in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne, 348,000 Turks left Macedonia; 500,000 rural and 300,000 urban Greeks took their place. Thus to-day the former homeland of Alexander and of his shrewd father Philip is definitely Hellenic. Long a great battle-field overrun between times by nomad herdsmen, now it is covered with increasing agricultural settlers, and the herdsmen, rarely true Greeks, are badly off for pastures. There are no Turks in Macedonia now. Yet the field women wrap their faces—ingrained custom or protection from the sun? Broken minarets that look like lightning-struck factory chimneys here and there remain. It is more wooded, has far more wild vegetation than Anatolia. The railway runs along a little lake with perfectly bare shores, except for cattle standing knee-deep in the edge of it, near a small town some distance back from it, with a soldier, in the form of a white marble angel, on a monument. Half the lake belongs to Greece, half to



Itinerant photographers embellish every city of Greece



The hilltop at Salonika is crowned by an ancient fortress wall



A refugee's pottery shop in Salonika

. . . Yugoslavia, I say, though a fellow-passenger insisted it is Bulgaria. Whatever the present allegiance of the northern shore, it looks as dry and treeless and uninteresting as the other lands of the Near East. Then, leaving the mountains behind, we swing southward across narrow plains of wheat, almost prairies, toward Salonika, the Macedonian capital.

CHAPTER VI

REPATRIATED SALONIKA

SALONIKA is preceded by a long jungle of gardens. Like most old cities in all this part of the world, it is built about a hill crowned by an ancient fortress wall. First constructed before the birth of Christ, this old wall behind the modern city incloses "Little Salonika." (As an example of Eastern seclusion, Turkish women born there had never been down into the city proper until the exchange of populations forced them to leave.) Imbedded in this wall, even in the lower parts of it, are the remnants of fine old columns, some with Roman inscriptions, Greek-inscribed fragments of churches, often upside down, as in many Turkish walls.

From the crest, with a fine breeze to make up for a hot and dusty climb, and two lonely and very friendly Greek conscript guards who seemed sad at their forced occupation, the view is well worth the exertion. Not far below is an extensive Jewish cemetery, the stones flat over the graves, and farther on another of upright Greek tombstones. The many thousands of Turkish graves were built over by squatters, who paid a bit to the mufti as the Turks were leaving in 1912, so that the present Government had to reimburse them before the ground could be recovered. The older part of the main town piles up the slope of the hill along the crest of which the ancient wall climbs, in huddled Turkish-featured layers of stone and mud masquerading as houses.

Below, along the shore and far out in both directions now,

lies the modern city. The better residential section, and new, almost distinct, towns of refugees stretch far out on rolling hills, 'way beyond the reach of Salonika's now inadequate street-car service. Across the blue bay Mount Olympus looms into the usually clear sky, the hazy line of mountains from well east of the city to far beyond the abode of the ancient gods seeming to cut it off from the rest of the country to which it now belongs.

Side walls, two wings of walls running down from the hilltop fortress to the sea, once embraced all Salonika. Most of these are gone now. An archway with striking if defaced reliefs, and a few other artistic remnants of the past have wisely been preserved; and the white stone tower at the sea end of one of these side walls also remains. Here, a favorite evening promenade and gathering-place, are outdoor cafés and restaurants, their rush-bottomed chairs piled up by day. One of the best things about Salonika is the garden restaurant and café beneath the trees at the edge of the sea just beyond this imposing old landmark. There, to the music of an orchestra in a kiosk and of the surf slapping up about the advanced tables, one may dine or sip coffee more pleasantly than anywhere else in Macedonia.

Salonika, like Drama, Cavalla, and many other Macedonian cities of the new Greece, trebled its population with the exchange of Turks for Greeks, and the second city of modern Hellas is still growing. There has been much new building, Paris-style business-residence blocks in light, almost gaily colored stone or stucco, five or six stories in height. Half consumed by fire during the World War, Salonika is greatly improved in the S-shaped section where the conflagration did most damage. It will be quite a city when the Greeks get it built. There are already some good new streets of boulevard width, awaiting completion.

To-day most streets are torn up; the water-front that promises to be a second Malecon is more covered with dust than with pavements (luckily, shoes are shined at less than two cents); the city is only half cobbled even in the old Turkish section. So far there is no adequate scheme for water supply and sewers; the insufficient (and typhoidy) water is such as to drive even a teetotaler to drink; in one section the telephone service functions only by day. Except about the White Tower there are almost no trees; grass is wholly unknown.

Hundreds of dirty ragamuffins loiter along the dug-up, unpaved water-front; there is little port activity. In contrast to some big new buildings worthy of Paris, there are whole blocks of shack-shops in which refugees strive to earn a scanty livelihood, as in most of the cities of Greece since the Smyrna disaster and the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. Even where there are sidewalks, they are covered every little way with the tables and chairs of mostly cheap cafés, so that the pedestrian must either sit down and drink or step into the street. Poor street cars perpetually overcrowded; and always, everywhere, at all times and places, dust, dust, dust, swirling, seeping, covering everything, even the landscape itself as with a veil. On the few occasions when there is a breeze from off the sea it is heavily laden with a dust that fills your very eyes and ears. Return to your hotel room, scrub up and dress again, get a new shine, and in five minutes' walk you are once more covered with sweat and dust. Salonika must indeed be a mud-hole when it rains; but you would be thankful even for that because of the respite it would bring from the dust.

Shop after shop, ranging from makeshift booths of the recently repatriated to big department-stores, all sell the same identical things. Sometimes one concludes that there should be some law besides the natural one limiting sellers,

perhaps allowing only those to keep shop who are not able-bodied enough to work at productive labor. Certainly it is proof of a lack of imagination that in a place with already far too many shops, refugees throw up shanties and gather a lot of wares that are already much more for sale than in demand. Swarms of boys hawk sweets, cigarettes, matches, what not in the streets; Jewish youths learning or practising up in their natural calling, perhaps. The constant caterwauling of petty street venders mingles with the noise of bootblacks reminding you with bell and thumping of brush on box that you need another shine a block beyond the last one; and they are always right.

The big second city of Greece is rather a sleepy place, particularly in the afternoon; seems slow, lacking in cheerfulness, perhaps in ambition, especially after one has seen Athens. Certainly it has a very different atmosphere than the national capital; in some ways it is more up-to-date and "snappy" (thanks perhaps to its Jews), in other ways more countrified. Compared with Greece proper it still has a decidedly Turkish atmosphere; many hamals, some of them Jewish, other interesting sights not often seen in Athens. Girls out alone in the streets have a suggestion of timidity about them even fifteen years after the expulsion of the Turks.

My artist friend complained that Salonika is all in one tone, no good at all from the painter's point of view; though in all fairness to that ancient city striving so hard to come back it must be admitted that the brush-wielder was not in his most virile and cheerful form when he graced my second visit there. There is an ambitious city plan, a rebuilding program (including a \$200,000 Y. M. C. A. establishment) that no doubt within a few years will make Salonika quite another city.

The water problem is a serious one almost anywhere in Greece. Salonika, whose population has been almost quadrupled, needs at least three times the ten thousand cubic meters a day which it is now able to dispense to its nearly 400,000 inhabitants. Water has become a political battlefield, with many counter accusations. Quite another type of activity is needed, for with no good and sufficient source near, a great many artesian wells must be dug and great works of canalization undertaken.

Instead, the rebuilding of an ancient church seems to these still very religious people the most pressing and important task. Among the sights of Salonika is this church of Saint Demetrius, the city's patron saint. The Greeks entered Salonika on October 26 (1912), which "happened" to be Saint Demetrius Day, and when the Turks had been chased out, a structure built about 300 A.D. was restored to Christianity. During the World War the English discovered another church underneath, which the Turks had completely filled up some five hundred years before. This is being dug up and will be made into a church again, along with the big one above, long used as a mosque and destroyed in the fire of September, 1917. As soon as that fire was over, the British had boards put up about the mosaics left on some of the square pillars and walls, which had no doubt been white-washed out of sight during the mosque days. Rather simple art, most of these mosaics; but they are sacred to the Greeks, and a little care of them at small cost has brought the British large dividends in gratitude.

In the lower church were found the bones of half a dozen bishops or better, which are to be given ceremonial reburial when the church is rededicated. Meanwhile all the bishops' bones are thrown together in a Standard Oil tin which stands uncovered in a corner open to workmen, visitors, and

all. The foreman who took us about handed out a shin-bone and a rib, evidently to show us how well built were the bishops of those far-off days. Or perhaps he meant us to kiss them, as of course the pious Greeks would.

Speaking of the English, there is still a minaret above what is again to be called the Church of St. George. This structure, shaped like the base of a huge round tower, rotunda style, was built two or three centuries before Christ, by the Romans, possibly as a place of worship, and has since gone through many vicissitudes. The early Christians filled it up to a higher level, perhaps in order to even it up with the streets that had naturally filled in meanwhile; they masoned up certain windows, cut certain others, and thereby made it into a church. The Turks filled it to still another level and made it over into a mosque. They never quite covered or destroyed the frescoes in the still high dome, however; even destruction is sometimes too hard work, for the Turks. To-day St. George's is the corpse of an old mosque, graves torn out by the roots, the wreck of a six-sided fountain on the dusty site of what may once have been a pleasant yard. But there is a cross again on the top of the dome, and the erstwhile minaret, its entrance stoned up, has been beheaded.

The minarets of Salonika are as silent now as the church bells of Anatolia. There were fifteen of them when the Turks were expelled. The city-planners decided to keep one as a monument or souvenir of the unhappy days behind them, or as a warning for the future; and they chose that of St. George. The very next day (the other fourteen having meantime been taken down) lightning knocked the top off this remaining one. Pious and superstitious Greeks, who are by no means lacking, knew full well what that meant. But the city-planning crowd is more advanced, and now we may

perhaps see the incongruous rebuilding of a Moslem minaret by the Christian and Mohammedan-hating Greeks.

Early morning; two young women picking out a coffin; they want one about three feet long. There are first-, second-, and third-class coffins in Greece, as well as three grades of funerals, weddings, baptisms, at which priests and others financially concerned make money accordingly. Third-class coffins are delivered to the undertakers of Salonika by the wagon-load. They are of orange-box texture, several inside the others, with only a few lath-like slats across the bottom, which will be covered with cloth. For the demand for small cheap coffins is high in the Macedonian capital. There is always typhoid, particularly at this time of year, and especially fatal among children between two and six. But no one seems to worry much about it. They are so used to it that they consider a typhoid death a decree of Fate; casually mention when they come to work in the morning that this child or those children died of it during the night; but do nothing about it.

Scores of cute youngsters run about the seaside cafés at ten, eleven, perhaps at midnight, drink a glass of water whenever they wish; mustn't of course drink beer or wine or coffee like their elders; it might do them harm. Nothing will induce the Greeks to boil drinking-water, not even in the fifteen-percent *taxe-de-luxe* hotels. It is not entirely because they are lazy, or fatalists, but because fuel has been so scarce and expensive for generations that any extra use of it seems to them unnecessary waste. So I had the artist inoculated and took the familiar shots again myself; yet I half suspect we had at least paratyphoid before the summer was over, at that.

They bury a lot of babies in Salonika. You can look out and see a baby funeral at almost any time, except in the hot



A cross-section of Salonika, second city of the new Greece



Moving day in Salonika, with a Jewish hamal as moving-van



A familiar sight anywhere in Greece

hours of early afternoon. First a priest in full bearded canonicals; a man carrying the tiny coffin; two acolytes, or their Orthodox equivalents, each with a candle, a boy in the center carrying aloft a huge silver cross; then perhaps, though not often, another priest. Up the dusty road they plod (every one walks at a Greek funeral) to a horribly treeless and grassless cemetery. Anywhere in Greece the corpse is usually in plain sight, especially in the towns and smaller cities, the head wabbling back and forth, with flies, dust, the blazing sun upon it.

I called upon the Metropolitan, with an Englishwoman as interpreter. This local head of the Orthodox Church had in a corner of the cathedral a spacious office resembling an ecclesiastical museum. But he was chary of speech whenever I attempted to delve below the superficial; had not yet shaken off his Turk-ruled complex, probably never would. So that all I got out of that call was a splendid exposure to typhoid, in the glass of water which etiquette requires each visitor to drink with the spoonfuls of jam a servant brought us.

We had better luck with the chief rabbi; or, rather, with the man of the world who spoke for the youthful locum tenens ad interim, as he was introduced, who himself answered only what a sign from the other man told him to hear. We spoke Spanish in the main; but the trained spokesman often mixed in French, as if that were easier for him. Poor Spanish, too: for example, "Justamente le voy escribir una letra." In school the Jews study in Greek (formerly in Turkish) and take French; but Spanish is spoken, and studied, if at all, only at home. Yet they are so used to the four languages that it does not seem to make much difference to them which one a new government requires.

Before the war, and until it suddenly began to expand

with its aftermath, Salonika's population was half Jewish; now only fifteen percent are Jews. While it is true that some Jews left, this sudden drop is due rather to the vast influx of refugees. Almost all Salonika Jews are descendants of exiles from Spain five or six centuries ago. They still call themselves "Judios españoles." Some are of the Yiddish or German-speaking central Europe type, a few of whom have drifted in from time to time; most of them came from Spain in the days of Isabella. The spokesman said no Jewish family could trace its family tree back to Spain, exactly, but as a community they almost all could. There were fifty-three synagogues, thirty of them with congregations from as many different towns in Spain, from which their ancestors came—until Salonika was burned in 1917. Now there are only five or six; the other congregations meet in homes.

Some of the principal buildings, stores, establishments in Salonika are adorned with Jewish names in Greek letters. Yet seventy percent of the Jews there, as in the world at large, are poor, according to the spokesman's tongue and the locum tenens's nod. You see pauperous-looking Jews peering out of queer hovels in the slums, hundreds of tenement-shack homes, yet with the same—shall we say unabashed?—manner which betrays them the world over. Jews become hamals or porters, do all sorts of work, take the place of moving-vans, in the Macedonian capital.

The Jews suffer no ostracism in Salonika, asserted their mouthpiece. "We have no trouble with the Greeks, any more than we had with the Turks, because we are not a nation . . . and only political questions really count out here in the Near East . . . questions often economic underneath, though made to seem religious on the surface. There is no intermarriage, because Greek laws do not allow it"—which is not quite what he meant to say, but rather that, since there is

only religious and no civil marriage in Greece, no one is able to unite in marriage two persons of different religions. "Some Jews, especially girls, become Greek in order to marry Greeks, but very few of us abandon our faith."

On the other hand, such of the newspapers of Salonika as I could read (being in French), both published or at least edited by Jews, frequently took pains to accuse their fellow-citizens of anti-Semitism. Just then they were fussing because the Government had cut down subsidies to Jewish charities while maintaining and even increasing the others; fair enough, it would seem, with the great change in population. Poor little sheets, the two Jewish-French dailies of Salonika, high-priced even at one drachma of to-day each. But all Greek newspapers are sad little handbills, at least as far as appearance goes.

"Oh, yes, indeed, there is much Propagande Zioniste here," asserted the youthful rabbi in one of his rare unsignaled replies. "All Jews in Salonika are Zionists. We often hold meetings, subscribe funds . . ."

Send colonists? Not so that you can notice it, assert non-Jewish residents. "Here, at least, Zionism seems to be an urge of all Jews to have all other Jews except themselves go back to Palestine."

In 1923, Greece and Yugoslavia signed a treaty giving the Serbs a free zone and a corridor to the sea at Salonika; but as yet nothing further has been done about it. The Serbs contend that the 9400 square meters granted them, of which 5400 are on land and the rest in the sea, constitute a space much too small to be of any practical use. It would give wharfage hardly sufficient for two small steamers, and meanwhile others would have to wait, perhaps for weeks, or land their goods in Greek territory and pay duty, thereby destroying the purpose of the treaty. Two Serb companies

have already officially applied for *all* the space available. Before the war, the commerce through Salonika, of what is at present Yugoslavia, was many times what the treaty would make possible.

CHAPTER VII

ACROSS THESSALY TO THE HANGING MONASTERIES

THE artist joined me at the end of June, in Piræus, whither I had gone to pilot him ashore and initiate him into the many mysteries of foreign travel. But I trust I shall not be required to go there and bring him back bodily for the mere purposes of narration. Picture me, then, leaving Salonika that first time alone, and intangibly acquiring a companion along the way.

Thanks to the exigencies of circumstances, mainly transportation, our journey about Greece and its islands was much like the travels of Theseus in the Cretan labyrinth, with no friendly maiden even faintly resembling King Minos's allegedly beautiful daughter to hold the end of the thread for us. Or perhaps it would be more nearly suitable to say that our route resembled that of two criminals dodging not very clever police. But I shall spare the reader all that also, and try to tell as straightforward and uncomplicated a story as my devious temperament makes possible.

To begin with, then, I was up in ample time to take the tri-weekly Simplon Express that runs by day . . . only to find that it left to-morrow; the usual concierge misinformation. One spends most of one's time in Greece waiting for transportation; a private yacht equipped with an airplane that can swim (and carry mules) would be ideal there. The line from Alexandrople through Salonika to Athens is operated by the Government; all other railways of Greece

are privately owned. If you must have statistics, the total Grecian railway mileage was at last accounts 1703, of which the State owned 874. The Simplon Express, knowing its passengers pay the high fare for speed, went tearing across the plains of Macedonia at fifteen, sometimes at almost twenty, miles an hour. Yet one is glad to wait for this tri-weekly transportation, with real comfort, instead of waiting for the even slower and more uncomfortable "mixte."

Besides, you cannot hurry in Greece. Even this express from Berlin and Paris slows down to a crawl at every little station. It is hard to understand how the Greeks moved fast enough to escape at Smyrna. Some, of course, did not; and the Turks also are slow. Perhaps the one time they can hurry is when the devil, in Moslem form, is after them.

The very blue Ægean, often within tossing distance, on one side; and on the other, across the unattractive plain, the enticing bulk of Mount Olympus, slowly yet constantly growing in size. Many picturesque costumes, especially among the women—red the prevailing color, with gold bangles, somewhat like gipsies—along the plain from Salonika to Katerina, back of which stands, usually lost in clouds, double-peaked Olympus, Jupiter's holy mountain, pointing sternly toward the heaven from which mankind has chased its old gods. Several rounded peaks, in fact, once the eyes are well focused; a vast ash-gray granite gorge between the two main bulks. Yet there seemed to be at least clusters of trees all the way to the top, and little patches of snow still, on July 20, in the valleys. The abode of Zeus—when he was not away justifying the suspicions of his jealous wife Hera—and the twelve higher gods of Greek mythology is an imposing heap of rock. I should of course have liked to climb it. But, after all, even the most indefatigable and fat-headeddest of us cannot go everywhere and do every-

thing. Hence the views of Olympus—there are at least three Olympuses, but this is the one vouched for by the Iliad—from the three trains that carried me past it had to suffice.

East of Olympus I had seen several tractors, in one field; and beyond, a real threshing-machine, a genuine threshing scene, spark-spitting engine and all; though even that was not working at our Western-prairie speed. Loads of wheat on small painted two-wheeled wagons, top-heavy loads, drawn by oxen or horses. Brown plains with no trees, no houses, no fences, nothing, except now and then a herd. At some stations a makeshift shop for travelers, like the summer shelters of crop-watchers.

In the summer, when the crops are worth stealing, thousands of these little shacks, some on stilts, some of two stories, made of grass and reeds, of branches or leaves, dot all the lowlands of Greece; quaint raised-platform watch-towers spring up all along the coast lands, even in high valleys. There, some or all of the family, dogs included, camp among the crops, with quilts, an occasional mosquito-net—though these are rare even in the best hotels. Especially in malarial regions these high summer sleeping-places are cooler and safer than the homes of those who occupy them. No dew, no rain; they get whatever breeze there is, and few drawbacks. Thus almost the poorest Greek family can have a summer home. Somehow I cannot quite picture our farmers, and especially their wives, living in town in winter and coming out to spend the summer in straw huts among their crops.

Flowers bedeck even tin and dry-goods-box huts; and the Greeks give more attention to the outward appearance of their houses, even of their shacks, than do the Turks. Wells in many parts, particularly in newly settled towns of Armenian, Greek, or other exiles from Turkey. Women work-

ing in the fields, some in short skirts and rolled stockings; they would be hanged for less in Turkey, even to-day!

Through the Vale of Tempe, magnificent plane-trees with festoons of laurel; the Peneus, said to be wild when in flood, now placidly wandering along below them. Tradition has it that laurel once grew only here, where the sacred mission from Delphi came every ninth year to gather it. The vale is a pleasant refuge in the dry summertime, a delightful five-mile walk, with a doubtful ferry at each end—and a good chance of missing your train. Once we passed through it in a railway coach with an open-air corridor on one side, an improvement over our Pullman observation platforms.

From Larissa by automobile, or roundabout by train, changing at a junction, beyond to the cross line up from Volo, will bring you to the so-called "hanging" monasteries of Greece. But we not only lost a day in Piræus waiting for the Volo boat; we expected to miss another day getting to the monasteries, because said "overnight" boat got in at noon instead of at dawn. A British war-ship in the Volo harbor; "limies" strutting about the flat, checker-board streets of the red-roofed and important-looking town, so white-hot within its inclosure of hills that the artist insisted it would be dangerous to carry a package of gunpowder through it. Behind Volo are twenty-four important-looking villages, inhabited by men who have grown rich down in the town or on the plain below; villages climbing clear to the wooded top—like a city scattered by dynamite—of Pelion. (Ossa being not far away, and heaping one upon the other would not make a Chimborazo at that.) Now there is a good automobile road to the top and over, unless our eyes deceived us.

A Greek-American of Asbury Park and the island of Samos, back on a month's visit to the "old country," and weary of it already, begged us to stay and go up among the



Looking down upon Kalabaka from the trail to the "hanging" monasteries



A stairway cut in the solid rock has superseded the hoisting apparatus at Aghia Triada

villages with him for the night. But miraculously there was an afternoon train, and we would not have spent an unnecessary hour in that abode of Hades, ruler of the lower world, for a dozen nights in the palace of Sultan Shahriyar. So we endured our unavoidable boiling in oil, using up a part of the time so hot on our hands to get to the station, where the homesick "American" clung to us until he could no longer keep pace with our car window.

The little train rattled and bounced and bumped along across the great plain of Thessaly beyond much faster than trains travel in what is still Turkey, faster most of the time than the Simplon "express." It was a ride surprisingly full of interest. Broad wheat-fields such as we had concluded poor little Greece did not possess, with wagons that look narrow and top-heavy being loaded by women and girls, sometimes even by men. Many of the wagons floundered along on more or less round solid wooden wheels of the days of Homer, before the spoke was invented, prehistoric ancestor of the disk wheel of to-day. Some of the wagons were bright red, in contrast to the yellow-brown landscape, some drawn by oxen, others by what might by a stretch of the imagination be called horses.

Rolling yellow fields among half-green rocky hills, those newly plowed showing a rich blackish soil with almost no stones—very unusual for Greece. Hundreds of straw shelters on posts, packed full of sheep and goats, the shepherd here and there still sleeping tightly against them, though siesta-time was over now for most of the plain. Those flocks already braving the ever-blazing sun went fleeing from the noisy train across the great fenceless expanse. There was wickedness, too, on that great plain: the artist's sharp Puritanical eye caught a donkey chewing tobacco, furtively, as if he knew only too well that he was sinning.

Hundreds of big stacks of wheat, perhaps rye and oats also, clustered about the villages. Some modern reapers and binders, and a dozen or more real threshing-machines belching smoke into the clear air, alternated with old-style threshing and winnowing; a girl driving half a dozen horses round and round a hard-earth space thickly laid with wheat bundles; women, girls, and men tossing grain forever into the air with wooden shovels. They work from dawn to noon and from four until it is impossible to see any longer.

Great herds of cattle and horses, watched over by galloping riders, combined with the threshing scenes, the whole villages of wheat stacks, to remind us of our own West. Women gleaning in the wheat-fields after the harvest, however, picking up every lost head of grain, brought us back to geographic reality. The straw is left long; is burned or plowed under after the flocks and herds have got what they can out of it. Huge herds and flocks, yet not a sign of a fence or a wall or other visible barrier on the whole plain, even along the railway. The shepherds are the fences, and cheaper than wire ones. Our train often came almost to a standstill while they rushed their flocks off the track ahead of us; sometimes the engine whistled itself hoarse for nothing more than a flock of turkeys. Speed and hurry are not superior to life, even mere animal life, in Greece.

In Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, there are shepherd tribes still living in the days of Homer. Those armed men with a shepherd's crook—some, natural ones cut from a thicket, others conventionalized ones made in shops and seeming of little practical use—and who make queer noises which their sheep seem to understand, are Wallachians. If your erstwhile professor of European history was as unimpressive as mine, you will not resent being reminded that Wallachia was a former principality which joined with Mol-

davia in 1861 to form what was before the World War the insignificant and little known kingdom of Rumania. A bilingual, semi-nomadic people, these shepherds, who live in beehive-shaped huts, move with the seasons, acknowledge the authority only of their own tribal chieftains. They come down from the mountain slopes from mid-April to mid-August, making seasonal bargains with the land-owners for permission to graze. Now, especially in Macedonia, refugees have settled so widely on their ancient pasture-lands that when they come down in the spring they find broad stretches of cultivation where for generations, if not for many centuries, they have been able to hire grazing ground cheaply. As there are few grazing-places elsewhere, their flocks must either migrate far afield or starve, which is no matter of minor importance in a land of comparatively so little meat and milk as Greece.

Wolves from the near-by mountains raid Thessaly in winter; the sun blazes almost incessantly upon it through the long summer; hence the stoutly mud-and-stone-walled pens as well as the branch-covered sun-shelters on poles. The great plain is not even treeless. Though nowhere forested, it is dotted with scattered small trees which here and there, particularly along a stream that had miraculously lived through the summer, gathered together into clumps, like groups of gossiping long-haired maidens. Thus, though it was on the whole thirstily dry, this vast plain corrected a growing false impression that all Greece, mainland and islands, is little more than an inhospitable region of bare, stony, treeless coasts backed by equally deforested, grassless, sun-scorched rocky mountains.

I had expected to shrivel from the heat here, too; on the contrary, there was a wind that all but blew the whiskers off a Greek priest opposite, a wind that surreptitiously

snatched my precious straw hat out of the train rack and the window—though it is unfair, perhaps, to mention personal tragedies. Besides, I had purchased that masterpiece of weaving, for about half a dollar, in Greece, where heads do not run to the exaggerated oval shape; and it would have looked ideally chic on a chorus lady playing a part in a Trianon comedy of Louis' XVI's time. We puzzled to know what disaster our fellow-travelers were evidently striving to impress upon us—until I reached in vain for the misfit contraption at the end of the line.

Thus we bumped on across the rich, prosperous plains of Thessaly to where they are squeezed to death by the mountains piled up in fantastic-topped ranges which shut Greece proper off from the rest of Europe. The sun sank beyond these just as a huge full moon, red-yellow as an angry Chinaman's face, appeared behind us. At the land end of the great Thessaly plain stand, like portals to another world, sheer masses of gray rocks, weird, uncanny, rather gruesome masses of stone that somehow oppress one with the sense of beholding mighty outcasts in the scheme of creation. We saw them first uplifted against the stars, those terrific, picturesque masses of mammoth gray rocks at Kalabaka, high upon which sit the famous "hanging" monasteries. By night it seemed incredible that human beings were living upon them; by daylight it seemed still more unbelievable. Even the artist had never before realized how wicked must be the world that could impel men to build their retreats so far out of it.

But meanwhile there was a fair hotel, for Greece, just outside the station, and an alleged restaurant near it. Nor were interpreters lacking. An ex-waiter in "the best hotels" of Boston and New York, now a charcoal-burner living fifty miles away in the mountains, took charge of us at the

outdoor supper. He was there again in the morning; but had "too much business" to be able to go to the monasteries with us. By this time we had been annexed by another "American," a shoemaker formerly of Lowell, Massachusetts. He was inclined to make it gratuitous; but when we insisted this could not be, he thought seventy-five "draks," one lone dollar, would be a fair price for taking care of us for the day. When they get home they soon get over their American notions on the value of money, and some of course left us before the war, or were not with us long enough to be thoroughly inoculated with the American point of view.

The guide's first task, naturally, since there is nothing more incessant than the scorifying Grecian summer sun, was to help me buy a hat—the fifth straw hat of the trip, by the way, for mortality had been unusually high in that respect. The best we could do in Kalabaka was as insufficient and chorus-girly a head-covering as the others; but it serves a man right if he will come to Greece in spite of being equipped with anything but the bowling-ball Grecian head.

The successful hat-seller had a brother in St. Louis. A squatting old woman spinning yarn in South American Indian style not far beyond had two daughters in New Jersey. At a café where we stopped to inquire whether any one had seen the artist (an expert in losing himself on the least possible provocation and within the smallest conceivable time or space), to drink, and to fill my canteen, there lolled two men who had lived in San Francisco. On the first slope up the mountain a donkey-driver in the old native costume greeted us casually in near-English and stopped long enough to boast that he was from Manchester, New Hampshire.

Speaking of the old Grecian costumes: not only does the president's body-guard in Athens still dress itself in lamp shades, but more or less of the old styles for men remain in

many parts of Greece. Semi-picturesque costumes may still be seen not only in the half-forgotten corners of the interior but even along the water-fronts of most of the islands; and sometimes they can be enticed into the sunshine, beads and all, to be photographed. Horny-handed peasants in ballet-dancers' skirts seem as incongruous as hobnailed brogans decorated with big red, or white and blue (the national colors), pompons, better suited to the bedroom slippers of a lady of the boulevards than to the home-made oxfords of these hardy countrymen, one of whom coming down a stone road sounds like a squadron of cavalry approaching in an earnest mood. Yet even the white ballet skirt of the old-fashioned Greek, often with a sun- and work-gnarled face that reminds one of an ancient olive-tree, is not so astonishing as the immense leather wallet of many folds in which he carries about his waist his bit of ragged money; and his heavy woolen legging-garter-spats are as incompatible with the deadly summer heat as the huge satchel-purse is with the skimpy Greek paper money. A few old costumes had taken the train at Volo; they had increased on the way across Thessaly, until here they were almost in the majority. Flat monkey-caps and heavy knee-length skirts or voluminous trousers with thick woolen leggings over white knitted home-spun underwear with ruffles, folded back on the wrists, were not so completely out of place here in the more or less cool edge of the mountains; but to see men in this costume in the hottest parts of Greece on the hottest summer days was enough to induce sudden unconsciousness in a fainty person.

Some of the shops and houses of Kalabaka are built sheer up against the base of the great perpendicular cliffs, high on the tops of which perch the "hanging" monasteries, so close in that a falling monk would be carried out beyond them by the natural parabola of gravity. These mighty ice-

bergs of rock had been impressive below. Our wonder increased as our guide led us up through a great U in the mountains by a path that soon took to clambering among the awesome blackish monsters. To be perfectly secure against the world, the flesh, and the devil, the monks of long ago evidently climbed from crevice to crevice in a way to suggest that they were much nearer the alleged immediate forebears of mankind than even their successors of to-day.

Our first stop was Aghia Triada. Of course our main reason for crossing all Thessaly to visit the famous monasteries was to behold and if possible to test the far-famed method of reaching them. But alas, little by little the romance of the world decreases, is gradually yet inexorably wasting away. The most romantic feature of the "hanging" monasteries is no more. For centuries the monks hoisted their brethren—and such visitors also as were foolish enough to risk their necks—to the tops of the rocks in nets at the ends of steel cables manipulated by a windlass above. We had come fully prepared to go aloft in the orthodox manner; even our respective insurance policies were fully paid up, beyond the age of protest. But in 1925, even as a record painted on the rock cliff above informed us, some wealthy Greek had contributed a Greek fortune of ninety thousand drachmas to cut a stairway in solid rock, tunneled in two places, around and up the once inaccessible giant boulder on which sits Aghia Triada.

True, the windlass was still in position, the cable and net intact. They are still used to hoist firewood and supplies from the bottom of the cliff—in fact, were so being used right then. An old monk who could be dimly seen on the outer arc of each gyration was winding up bundles of excellent oak of firewood length, which a youth with a skinny horse had deposited far down below just as we arrived. But there was

no hope, according to our guide, of our taking the aërial journey now.

The old ladder up a crevice, of iron rungs set in very heavy wood, was still there also, but in the last stages of desuetude. There was no choice but prosaically to mount the encircling stairway.

A little way up one reaches an iron door above which hangs a wire ending in a knob or a stick, a tug at which brings after a little the faint tinkling of a bell in the monastery far above. Quite some time and considerable near-American cussing on the part of our guide elapsed before anything else happened. But at length the door was opened by some mechanical device similar to those in the walk-up apartments of New York City (trust a Greek monk to save himself the labor of coming down to let in each visitor), and we began the long steep climb to the monastery itself.

Even the new stairway was not of the kind one would care to dash carelessly up and down. Steps two or three feet wide flanked on one side by a continuous wall of still unweathered rock and on the other by nothing but the bright clear air of upper heights are not conducive to scampering. Besides, one had an eerie feeling that persisted all through that day's jaunt, with its endless series of surprises. When the first iron door, jammed somehow into a crevice of the mighty rock, slowly opened of itself, one felt that the time had come to meet the fairies and demons that must surely inhabit the queer caves of this region, that we were about to enter a fantastic story, illustrated by Maxfield Parrish, and perhaps even assume a part therein.

CHAPTER VIII

BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES

THE tops of those mighty masses of rock rising abruptly from the valley of the Peneus, on which hardy pioneers among the monasterial class built the "hanging" monasteries, vary in extent from a city lot to an acre or two. Buildings of stone and wood, with roofs of tile, were long ago laid upon them, with no particular plan. The various units sprawl about the rock summit like the meanderings of a goat hard pushed to find something to eat. Here and there some of the rooms are supported on timbers wedged in the rocks; some of them seem to hang miraculously in space. Whatever one's opinion of the inmates of the "hanging" monasteries to-day, one cannot but have an immense respect for the daring individuals who first constructed these picturesque retreats over the sickening depths of the almost bottomless black chasms beneath. The first men up must indeed have been human fleas.

Within the iron door of the establishment itself the way led through a wide ancient chamber of rock floor, still appreciably mounting, in semi-darkness. This brought us at length to the windlass platform, with a breath-taking view of the journey we might have made a few years earlier. The heavy net in which visitors were once raised and lowered like painters up a sky-scraper was still there. But under no circumstances would the bearded monk who had just finished his morning's stint of firewood-hoisting permit us even to descend by it,

for which we were doubly glad now that we could examine the whole contrivance, clumsy and home-made and looking distressingly weak, at least for such precious passengers as ourselves. The windlass was stout, to be sure, but the pulley on which our lives would as completely have depended, particularly the net that was no less important, looked anything but infallible.

In the olden days when the monks and pious laymen visitors alike had to depend on this primitive elevator, when the monks drew one another and their callers up by marching slowly round and round the windlass, pushing at poles thrust into it, like sailors round a capstan—nay, even let you down again, hence no doubt contributions were more popular than possible retribution—perhaps the whole contraption was kept in better condition. But the Greeks are scarcely more given than the Turks to keeping things up, and climate can do much damage quickly. Besides, no statistics are available as to how many visitors have been spilled out upon the exceedingly hard rocks hundreds of feet below.

We found four monks at Aghia Triada. Two of them were solemnly reading responses in a grotto-like chapel, one of a dozen quaint old dark wood-and-stone chambers. One of the four had been a waiter (more likely, if the full truth were known, a dish-washer) in a well, though not too favorably, known series of New York restaurants. He had been here six years, even as the near-maturity of his beard testified. A few poor words of English still clung to him. Visitors are always welcome, we gathered; particularly Americans, with their notoriously open purses. A cup of Turkish coffee and a glass of mastika are the invariable preliminaries.

The artist was well acquainted with mastic, naturally; he had used all sorts of varnish in his work; but never before had he been called upon to take it internally. The first sip

of the milky-looking stuff, with its strong licorice taste and worse, took him back to student times when he now and then inadvertently licked a paint-brush; kept him there, in fact; for that one sip lingered somewhere below and for days flavored all he ate. The Greeks seem to be entranced with the flavor of varnish; even their wine is strongly impregnated with a pitch against which most American stomachs rebel. Water, however, is not plentiful on the summits of the monasterial rocks; the head monk complained so openly at our request for a second glass of it that our guide berated him like a fishwife and insisted that we leave no gratuities at Aghia Triada—which was all very well now that the stairway had come.

Half an hour or less of climbing and descending brought us to Aghios Stefanos Monastery, a hulking stone building covering all the top of an immense rock. Here no stairway was necessary; no hoisting apparatus had ever existed. A short bridge ending abruptly at an iron door, across a very deep but narrow chasm, connects it with the outside world. Four monks were at home here also; but in this case five other inmates were at work on the farms belonging to the establishment, in the valley spread out like a relief map far below. From any of the monasteries we could look down upon the valley of the Peneus, now a broad stream of blazing sand, along which meandered a tiny brook, but in winter a raging torrent which farther down roars its way through the Vale of Tempe on its way to extinction in the Gulf of Salonika. Kalabaka town was like some doll city sheer below; across the broad sandy valley of the Peneus lay mountains that piled away into Yugoslavia.

One of those at home was a former cotton-mill employee also of Lowell, Massachusetts. He, too, had been back six years. Unlike most Greek immigrants, he had been displeased

by American life and had returned to contribute his slight fortune to and become a monk in this monastery of St. Stephen, on its lofty rock overlooking the valley of the Peneus. Like the others, he was dirty, seedy, of an attitude of being done with life. He had forgotten all but a few words of English and was not very sure of those. Timid, unassertive, thanks to either nature or the monkish life, it was easy to see why he was not the type that succeeds in the free-for-all American fracas. He was one of the very few Greeks returned from the United States who did not admit a longing to get back there.

From swallows' nests tucked away beneath the eaves came peaceful twittering perfectly in keeping with the rest of the scene. Sometimes even eagles hover about the tops of these great rocks of Kalabaka. The center of the wandering cluster of buildings inside the single outer wall was the chapel or main church of Aghios Charalambos—if I caught the introduction. Artistically the interior ranged from crude and bizarre attempts at decoration worthy of the cave-man, the ever present ikons monopolizing the limelight, to some really amazing examples of wood-carving. Imagine dozens of pillars of wood from three to six inches in diameter carved in such a way that the center is completely removed, and what is left, cut into flower designs exquisitely delicate yet charmingly naïve, almost primitive in feeling.

For some reason only a small padlocked grotto was sacred to Aghios Stefanos—Saint Stephen himself. The ex-cotton-worker took us up a tight little stairs into a locked room where the "precious" things of the monastery were kept in a glass case. There was the skull of Saint Stephen, completely inclosed in an elaborately carved silver sphere, with a hole in it through which the pious kiss the top of his holy head. The ossified fingers of some one or other of ecclesias-

tical fame, the shin-bone of some other saint, the desiccated hand of "Lady Mary," a leg bone or two, a rib or so were all put up in this same kissable form inside silver shields, jeweled and fancifully carved. Our peregrinations within Aghios Stefanos ended with the parlor, with framed pictures of former (or at least deceased) monks, ragged curtains that must once have been worth looking upon, the general atmosphere of the rarely used best room of our farm-houses of a generation ago, with a far-reaching view of the little railway crawling eastward across the plain into which merged the broad sandy river bed of the Peneus.

This, as you may have guessed, was by no means our first day in Greece, and from much walking our legs were equal to the effort of trying to reach the main monastery in time for the cook thereof to conceive the idea that we should like to be invited to dinner. But the pace brought a howl from the erstwhile Lowellite, who finally sank to earth, complaining that his legs were "sick." He was vastly worried, too, by what he called my "braveness" in scaling rocks along the way in quest of places of vantage from which to photograph the monasteries, insisting that if I did not break my supposedly precious neck I should at least get lost or drop dead of sunstroke. But the artist reassured him, insisting that nothing ever happens to me, which is, alas, almost the case.

There were once twenty-four monasteries here, with hundreds of inmates; to-day there are not twenty-four monks in the four that are still occupied. Some of the smaller ones have already toppled from their lofty perches and crashed down into the awesome ravines. Abandoned "monkisterias," as our guide called them, hung on the brinks of chasms, clung to the rounded tops of mighty isolated rocks like caps on a hairless skull, teetered in incredibly precarious positions. We must have passed at least a dozen of them on the way, falling out

of niches in the rocks like abandoned swallows' nests; in some cases, since the flimsy drawbridges or other means of approach had rotted away from neglect, as inaccessible now as when the forgotten monks of the Middle Ages first made this region a holy refuge.

An hour's steep walk brought us at length to the principal monastery, which gives them all their Greek name, Meteora, meaning, so I am informed, "up in the air." It stands high above all others, and was inaccessible except by net and cable—until it set the nefarious example, in 1922, of cutting a costly stairway up the face of the mighty natural pillar on which it is built. Though net and cable are still there, too, visitors now tug at a bell-wire beside an iron door at the bottom of the sky-towering face of sheer rock, to be at length admitted to a grotto like the setting of a tale from the Arabian Nights. Thence we toiled hundreds of feet upward by a series of stairways laboriously cut in the natural rock, now passing through subterranean passageways, now blazed upon by the baking sunshine. Next thing we know, the famous monasteries will be equipped with bathrooms and the end will have come—for no genuine Greek monk could survive that ten-century jump.

But alas! we reached the top before twelve, with marvelous appetites and lip-smacking anticipation, only to learn that it was a fast-day! It was our bad luck not only to have overlooked the fact that it was Friday but to have brought no food with us, though Mr. Baedeker had strongly advised it, contrary to the poorer advice of the Americanized native who accompanied us. The feast we had looked forward to but which the Fates forbade was replaced by what our companion miscalled bean soup—being a stew of corn and what at least closely resembled the garbanzos of Spain—peasant bread, and wine ruined with resin. The head monk tried to

tell us that we could not eat such stuff, that we should come back on some more propitious day, and we had visions of dropping from starvation on the way back to the town far below. But at length our pseudo-fellow-countryman talked him into letting us decide the question ourselves by sitting down at table with the monks and two layman visitors, one an army officer, and we found the fast-day fare much less impossible than we should under ordinary circumstances.

These semi-fast days come also on Tuesdays, it seems, but wine and cigarettes are not forbidden even then. Perhaps the pitch-flavored wine is meant as a penance; though that can hardly be, on second thought, for not only is it the custom to pollute thus the juice of the grape all over Greece, but the monks ably demonstrated that they were not consuming it against their will. Personally I have much digestive endurance, but the mere smell of such wine quickly upset the traditions of the artist's Puritan stomach.

Five monks and as many servants rattled about within this huge rambling establishment, and strange as it may sound there was not an "American" among them. At Aghios Stefanos our guide had seen to it that we dropped a few dirty scraps of Greek paper masquerading as money into a padlocked box in the chapel, and had bespoken a tip for the ex-Lowell monk himself. Here we were told to give only to the servants, who evidently are allowed the rake-off on feeding at least foreign and unpious visitors, not to be rated as pilgrims.

There was no escaping the siesta which occupies all Greece during the first three hours of the afternoon, even had we not walked ourselves into sympathy with all the occupants of the place. I took mine on a long wooden bench, glass-smooth with centuries of sitting monks, in the aërial veranda overlooking a world of magnificent scenery, where to roll over the

adjacent low railing would have been to drop at least a thousand feet. The artist, being by nature given to privacy, descended to the windlass grotto below, where he too found a bench long enough to accommodate most of his frame, not to mention a piece of firewood that served as pillow. Our couches were fairly comfortable to men who had already survived a score of nights in Greek hotels. But sleep was impossible because a convention was being held of all the monastery flies in Greece. Whenever they ceased buzzing for a moment at command of the chairfly, the silence was appalling. The croaking of ravens was heard at times; once we heard a peculiar swishing sound overhead and looked up to see two great birds as large as eagles sail by on motionless wings. But the only other sound was the steady zooming of a breeze we would have given much—had we been possessed of it—to carry with us during the rest of our stay in Greece.

However, the view was well worth sitting up for. On every hand lay a landscape apparently as dry as the Sahara. Yet many of the rocks were scarred with watercourses; precipice walls of mighty upright boulders were washed and weathered until they looked like immense man-made stone buildings. Watercourses had made natural Parthenons of more than one of the great rock pillars. There are isolated, glacier-scraped rocks of this kind nowhere else in Greece, it is said. The rest of the scene showed arid mountains. But by shifting my place to where the eyes could command the plain far below, I could make out faint patches of semi-green, of yellow or reddish soil. There seemed to be no human activity whatever at this hour of the day. No roads, hence no automobiles or other vehicles, and the mule paths are so far below that the tinkle of mule bells is heard but faintly if at all. The country roundabout is too rocky and barren for even the Greek peasant to cultivate.



The aerial veranda at Meteora overlooks magnificent scenery



The age-beautified chapel at Meteora is a subject for the painter rather than the photographer



Only a Greek could endure the old-fashioned costume during a Grecian summer



Once he worked in the cotton-mills of Lowell, Massachusetts

Memory harked back to Omeishan, that mighty monastery peak in western China, in some ways very similar, yet on the whole quite different. That is 11,000 feet above the plain; Meteora is only 1850. Here there was no forest, no cloud fields far below, heat rather than Arctic cold; even the great masses of mountains of the Balkans, with bright yellow patches off toward the declining sun, shutting the world out on the north, were mere hills when measured by the Tibetan ranges. Here one could catch, in certain shifts of the wind, the singing of cicadas, hear roosters crowing in the town below. Omeishan had seemed like being on another planet, from which one had the privilege now and then of seeing plainly for a bit, through a rift in the clouds below, the country round-about, as one might catch a glimpse of the after-world, the world outside oneself, or whatever it is, once or twice during a lifetime. Yet one insane and one drunken monk had jumped from Meteora in the past few years; and the drop was nearly enough like that mighty one at Omeishan to make the leap here equal at least in its material results to springing into the arms of Buddha there.

Once there were many bandits in these mountains. If we had come to Greece twenty years before, when we first planned to do so, we should have had an excellent chance of gathering a few bandit adventures. Evidently there are none now—unless it be a rare political kidnapping—though to-day there is much more Greek territory in which brigands might roam.

When siesta time was over, the igoumenos, or head monk, came out to sit on the bench beside me and read last week's politics in day-before-yesterday's sad little Athens newspaper. Dreary little dodgers indeed, the journals of Greece; the other monks were little interested, and no wonder. The Grecian sheets contain almost no news, and the "leading

articles" are much more filled with words than with thoughts. Yet it is rather pleasant to be in a country where you cannot read the newspapers, for then you find that ninety-nine per cent of the "news" the man at home would be horrified to be without does not matter an iota after all.

The chief head-liner at Meteora was not the igoumenos, however, but one of his fellow-monks, a huge man with a face strikingly like that of our American Indians, who in spite of nearly fifty years, man and boy, of monastery life, had never succeeded in raising the slightest hint of a beard. A beardless monk is worth coming far to see in Greece. One would suppose that failure to accomplish the one visible accomplishment of his calling would have resulted in his expulsion. His suspiciously boyish voice, his childishly querulous air contrasted amusingly with his flabby features, with the stooped shoulders of his huge though useless bulk. His occupations seemed to consist of lying abed and sitting out on the glass-smooth bench of the aërial veranda, where blew such breezes as existed.

If I understood our Lowellized interpreter, there are both types of Greek monasteries at Kalabaka. In one kind the inmates contribute to the common fund, upon entering, everything they possess; in the others they own personally a portion, a kind of stock, in the concern, may under certain conditions withdraw with their share, are more or less independent. Much land once belonged to the Meteora monasteries; some still does. The monks rent out great areas of the surrounding mountains, for the grazing of sheep mainly,—collect a hundred thousand drachmas a year from this source, according to our not infallible informant. The monks complain that the Government has taken away almost all their lands, has forbidden young men to join their orders. The four monasteries still occupied at Kalabaka had four, five,

five, and three monks respectively, a total of seventeen, and in addition fifteen workers or layman servants; that is, only thirty-two persons all told. The workers get five hundred drachmas a month, something under seven dollars at that year's rate of exchange. Monks are decreasing, say Greeks of the layman class, because the monastic life has gone out of fashion; "nowadays," as our guide put it still more succinctly, "men will not go without women."

Besides the igoumenos, or prior, Greek monasteries are inhabited by pateres (fathers), dhiakoi (deacons), and kalo-gheroi (good old men), or ordinary monks. The latter work on the farms belonging to the establishments—sometimes. Below these come the dulentades (servants), who do not take vows of celibacy but who may also be too lazy to shave, as is usually the case. No doubt it is hard to find soap and razors in a monastery, anyway. Creature comforts are rather looked down upon; beds of boards with a rug as mattress, for instance, are the usual thing. On the other hand, there are beauties in these old cloisters, of which most of the simple-minded inmates wot not; the golden-brown, age-beautified chapel among Meteora's rambling structures, for example, was a subject for the painter rather than the mere photographer.

I had hitherto kept strictly to myself the opinion that the bearded brethren of Greek monasteries are among the laziest and most useless human beings on earth; but now that it had been confirmed by no less an authority than my lenient-minded fellow-sufferer on my Grecian travels, I hesitate no longer about expressing myself. No doubt I lack that streak of mysticism without which one cannot look upon such establishments with a sympathetic eye. To the mere materialist, however, the inmates of Meteora seemed to be little better than loafers who dawdle indifferently through their religious

services, with nothing else to do but to raise whiskers. To be sure, since water is none too plentiful among these mammoth boulders, lack of cleanliness might be overlooked—did one ever catch one of these bearded worthies doing anything useful for himself, let alone for his fellow-men.

Unkempt individuals who appear to have approximately the status of servants attend to all the work, including the cooking, such as it is. The monastery kitchens are so primitive as to be comparable to an Indian wigwam. A circle of stones in the center harbors a handful of coals over which an ancient and very grimy long-handled pot for Turkish coffee hangs perpetually. At one side is a row of crude stone ovens ebbonized with age and smoke—smoke which seems to have no exit except through such crevices as it can find in the roof. Infinitely pictorial, of course, this sooty interior with its tiny charcoal fires emphasizing the blackness, but . . .

As old men's clubs the monasteries of Greece no doubt justify their existence. Also in a land where there are already more people than can decently support themselves, the monks are acquiring merit by not producing children. But that is about all the perhaps uncharitable outsider can say for them. Like their Buddhist prototypes, they have no interest in the possible salvation of the rest of mankind; if they work at all, it is for their own good here and hereafter.

Yet it is a pity that these extraordinary retreats at Kalabaka should be allowed to fall into decay, perhaps to disappear entirely; for they are well worth the tiresome journey to reach them, if merely as illustrations of life in the Middle Ages. Though they are intellectual blanks, most of the "good old men" are kind-hearted and hospitable. The few who are left are well worth their keep as caretakers. But there seem to be no new recruits here, unlike the case of some other mon-

asterial centers in republican Greece, and the "hanging" monasteries are almost certainly well on their way to extinction.

Our canteens replenished from windlass-hoisted buckets that descended into what appeared to be a cistern cut in the solid rock, we half descended, half flanked the mighty gorge which separates Meteora from its nearest neighbor, Vailami, fourth and last of the still inhabited monasteries. A wire easily a hundred feet long hung down the face of the cliff, and a tug at this eventually brought down to us the faint tinkle of a bell. Here the stone stairway was older, and less difficult; it looked, in fact, as if Vailami had never been accustomed to hoist its visitors. Once it had twenty-four inmates; now we found only the head monk there, and were forthwith taken into another farm-house-like parlor and dosed with pitch-ruined wine. Like its neighbor Meteora, Vailami has never admitted a woman within its gates.

The monks of Kalabaka should have been exceedingly thankful for our visit, for we finally brought them the first rain in months, the first dampness from heaven we had known in all Greece, for even dew seems to be completely lacking during the long summer. It had been growing cloudy ever since our siesta—a most unusual experience in the Greece we knew. White masses of clouds that seemed merely to be masquerading as rain-carriers gathered slowly into squadrons, battalions, regiments, whole armies. Soon after Vailami had swallowed us up, there came distant rumbles of thunder, an increase from breeze to wind, a spattering of drops which we took to be mere pretense but which gradually became a sprinkle, developed before our astonished eyes into the first and, I believe, last shower we ever saw in Greece, and presently the skies were deluging the earth in bucket-fuls.

By this time the storm had driven in another third of the monkish strength of our sheltering retreat, in the form of a sturdy misogynist in disheveled gown and dripping beard and hair, carrying with him the mattock with which he had been working in the fields below, and the girth of a thin horse he had driven loaded with firewood to the wire-dangling foot of the cliff. He must indeed have been gifted as a weather prophet to have reached his lofty home almost at the beginning of the genuine deluge.

We tried to get the monks to credit us with the boon over which they almost danced for joy. For all the country had been ardently longing for rain these several months. But how often is credit denied where credit is due! With the rain came a complete change of scene. Yellow and reddish colors became slaty or dull green; the entire vast void of the valley below us was filled with falling water; rain swept across the faces of the brown-gray masses of rocks beyond like a great waving veil or curtain. Within half an hour we could hear come to life streams where no stream had existed for weeks before; the slight streak of water meandering along the broad sandy river bed far below was swollen before our very eyes to a Peneus worthy the name of river. Only those who have spent a summer in Greece can realize how worthy of these few words of thanksgiving is a shower that at home would be forgotten overnight.

On the way down, now and then taking refuge in caves or beneath overhanging boulders from final sorties of Jupiter Pluvius, we found the vegetation decidedly heavier on the western sides of the tumbled region. Caves within caves, some with aged scaffoldings, gaped far up in mammoth rocks. There were caves large enough to house two or three hundred sheep, as they sometimes do in winter, according to our now departed guide; caves that resembled the pirate nests

on the upper Sikiang in southwestern China. Was it earthquakes that had broken off enormous chunks of certain of these isolated giants among boulders, some so recently that they were not in the least weathered, leaving one of them with a tunnel neatly cut clear through its base, giving another the appearance of a man garbed in the tucked-shirt trousers of certain parts of Greece and standing knee-deep in mud? That we lost ourselves, or rather, mistook the town below Meteora for Kalabaka itself and floundered for an hour or more along what in the darkness hardly resembled roads, before we ran upon our worried guide, who had gone home roundabout to crave further dispensation from what seemed to be an exacting spouse, is of course a personal matter without general significance.

On the plains of Thessaly next morning there was evidence of much less rain than among the foot-hills of Kalabaka. Veritable crowds of men and women were winnowing grain with wooden shovels even at dawn, the moon still intent on her nightly duty. At Trikkala we gambled with Fate, abandoning the train that would eventually have brought us to the main line, and winning the toss; for not only did we find a Ford limousine willing, as soon as two other passengers had been collected, to transport us, but were asked only a dollar each for the forty-mile trip across the rich plain to Larissa, with the promise thrown in of catching the daily train from there to Salonika.

Even on second view the plain of Thessaly had not lost its interest. Enormous herds and flocks grazed under the eyes of Wallachian shepherds in Homeric costumes—white leggings, knitted trousers apparently, a coat hung over one shoulder. Many of them winter in Trikkala. Flocks of turkeys; stacks of wheat in clusters of a score or more; tobacco growing, and drying in festoons upon mud-brick houses;

women in costume, colorless or black and white, though seldom equaling the men in theatricality; pole-legged sheep shelters by the score; poor corn; good wheat—or was it rye? Scores of trees with strangely crooked trunks and queerly clipped branches all had stork or crane nests in their laps, the birds standing up in them in their classical one-legged attitude. One such family consisted of eighteen adult storks—or cranes, have it your own way; I am weary of alternating my conclusion with each new informant all the way from Egypt to Greece. Six were gathered in solemn conference on each top of two ancient church towers, and six debated their opinion in the matter in nests among the trees.

The large man who had been packed into the back seat between us at the last moment saw to it that we missed nothing along the way, despite our deplorable ignorance of any human form of expression. He was a master of gesture: "Pst!" here; "Pst!" there; now he was staging a shooting scrape among the stony hills close along which we encircled a great swamp; now gleefully cutting the throats of the bandits, evidently Turks, after their capture. Along with his pantomime went a constant fire of words, growing louder and louder, as if he would make us understand Greek if he burst in the attempt; words wholly unnecessary to a man of his native histrionic ability. The artist was born patient; I have had the outer appearance of patience, when much may be lost without it, thrust upon me. We endured the roaring, cramping, nudging, gesticulating, well-meaning nuisance between us in a way that gave voluminous testimony to the influence of monasterial life even in slight doses.

A great change came when we crossed into territory from which the Turk had only recently been expelled—bare, uncultivated, even more treeless than Greece; two ruined fortresses still glaring at each other across the sunken road

between them. A primitive ferry, a glimpse of the remaining minarets of Larissa, a descent upon the station just exactly in time to board the daily train—an astounding Greek performance. Luckily we had not even been sure of its existence, to say nothing of its hour of departure, or that journey from Trikkala would have been made miserable by the fear of missing it.

CHAPTER IX

ON TO ATTICA, WITH A NIGHT IN THEBES

UP and up and up in sliding shale, high above a great plain, whole hills laid over with patchwork quilts of ripening wheat-fields, scattered shrubs. Down again and through a vast granite gorge, more striking than Tempe. Over two mountain chains that sweltering afternoon, each time by many tunnels. Immense wheat-ripening plains far below, between the distant glimpse of Thermopylæ and Bralo, the station for Parnassus. In the days when the world was young and unsophisticated such natural phenomena made lyric impression. What would the ancient Greeks say could they see us now, riding comfortably in a room on wheels through that vast gorge of magnificent vistas by way of many hellish tunnels, in perfect contrast to the heavenly scenes between them?

The singing of cicadas was heard above the sound of the train; they certainly do not prophesy rain in Greece, as the country-bred artist noted. Soldiers with bayonets at most stations, bridges, tunnels; we could not gather whether it was a Bolshevik or a Pangalist uprising which the Government was nipping in the bud. Great jagged heaps of Parnassus, mighty gorges between—a dozen peaks, not merely one—bulked into the sunseting sky. A great broadening plain with much cotton, in blossom, between Bralo and Thebes; trees almost unbrokenly along the railway, willows, a rare sight; yet unwelcome, for they shut off the landscape.

ON TO ATTICA, WITH A NIGHT IN THEBES III

We had the unfortunate thought of spending a night in Thebes. Not that there was any reason to do so; except for sentiment's sake and the ability to boast about it afterward. The word thivai in Greek letters on a mere mud-brick box of a red-tiled station; the artist almost refused to descend, to credit my Grecian erudition; said if that was what it looked like now . . . It was, to be sure, disconcerting.

But the station-master was not wholly ignorant of French, for all his admiral's uniform, and the driver of the new Ford into which he bowed us had lived twelve years in Wyoming, still spoke "plenty Engleesh."

"Ever going back?"

"No; very sorry; but too much kids, too many family."

It was a mile or so, past a new refugee town, up to the hilltop, the former acropolis, on which sits all that is left of what was once the most powerful city of Greece. We should have preferred to walk, after all day on the train, now that the extreme heat had abated. The artist would have given his coat—most burdensome and useless of his possessions—to have been able to pause and sketch the monolith of a man in a smock riding a donkey several sizes smaller than himself. But the station-master got a free ride home; and, after all, it cost us only twenty-five "draks."

The hotel . . . But why conjure up painful experiences, now that the bites are healed and almost forgotten? Even the man from Wyoming admitted it might have been better, but . . . He would drop us at the museum, which the station-master would order opened, without additional cost. It was a poor little museum, on the whole, though no doubt an archæologist would have raved over the broken vases, the bits of ancient columns, and an imaginative child have gazed in awe at the plaster replica of the sitting Lion of Chæronea, certainly at the keeper, who dogged our every footstep, as old

as Thebes—and as feeble. Epaminondas in his old age, perhaps. No sign of Œdipus, however, nor of the monster called Sphinx—though women's heads on lionine bodies were not lacking—so that we could not guess the riddle and save ourselves the devouring we knew we were in for. Delightful views in all directions, however, especially back toward the now hazy mass of Parnassus.

But the Thebes of to-day is unusual only for the fine old sycamore trees on either side of its wide main street. Beneath them are more rush-bottomed chairs and café tables than both sexes and all ages of the population could occupy. Here some of the old Grecian costumes survive. Many a dignified, horn-handed gentleman is dressed in a lamp shade, in giants' trousers; ancient costumes all more or less crossed with the hand-me-down garb of modern times; nor are there many men in full modern dress either, among the cap-wearing multitude.

There is perpetually running cold water in Thebes, though the inhabitants do not seem to take much advantage of this superiority to the other towns of Greece. Water pours from faucets in many parts of town. At the café where we managed a supper with the help of the man from Wyoming, it was drawn from a tree; that is, the tap protruded from a huge sycamore trunk beside us, suggesting nectar of the gods or maple-syrup sap.

And speaking of water in Thebes, thereby hangs a very sad tale. There was no slop-bucket in our room. When I had removed some of the grime of travel in the one unscoured wash-basin and sought to make it ready for the artist before turning to the one and only towel—Greeks cannot fathom why two persons traveling together should want separate rooms, towels, basins, or even drinking vessels—I noted this not unusual lack of furnishings and chucked my water out



The crude, dirt-cheap, beautiful pottery of Greece enthralled my artist-companion



In Greece rush-bottomed chairs are more numerous
than human beings



More or less of the old Balkan costumes remain in
many parts of republican Greece

a window. There is nothing unusual or reprehensible or even socially improper in this gesture in the smaller towns of Greece; moreover there was a tin awning beneath, which should have protected any possibly squeamish passer-by in the street below.

Yet barely had I relinquished the basin before I realized again that I am often so impulsive as to be sometimes repulsive. There was a shout of "Bravo!" from beneath the tin awning. At first I mistook this exclamation to be freighted with its Italian meaning, and accepted the applause accordingly. But it seems that in Greek the vocable has rather the contrary significance. Quite unsuspectedly a dozen or more of the gentlemen of Thebes had been sitting in the inevitable café chairs beneath the tin eaves. Hitherto this principal cross-street had been one of the most quiet sections of ancient Thebes; now suddenly there were signs of activity that brought back memories of the swarming of bees in my bucolic youth.

I allow nothing short of necessity to interfere with my earliest possible surrender to Morpheus; besides, it still did not occur to me as I subsided into what had once long ago been a bed that I was in any way concerned in the increasing vivacity of ancient Thebes. Even my best friends admit that at times I am inordinately slow-witted. But at the shout of "Bravo!" the artist had desisted in the act of removing his last garments and peered out into the street. He reported unusual activity along the front, several very excited citizens running about in circles, alternately brushing their coats or looking ruefully at the hats in their hands and gazing up at our windows. From time to time they uttered an exclamation which sounded like "Woof! Woof!"

Even then I did not see how two perfectly harmless wandering Americans could be held responsible for so slight a

mishap. It was fairly clean water; all the garments I had so far seen in town needed water; I stretched out as nearly prone as the hammock shape of my ancient-Greek bed-springs permitted and let Thebes dance on. I was wearing the lower garment of my pajamas. That, to be sure, was far too much, but for once I happened to have made that concession to decency.

Heavy footsteps sounded on the stairs. A large Greek in a purple face and a white suit that had long been calling in vain for the laundryman burst into the room. In one hand he carried a straw hat coffee-brown with age; in furious staccato he sputtered words we did not understand, at the same time brushing his ancient hat with an aged sleeve. On his heels came the landlady, utterly ignoring my loud protests in English to consider my modesty. It is the charming custom in Greece for the chambermaid (who in this and many other cases is also the hostess) to enter a guest's room whenever the whim strikes her, without knocking or giving any other sign of her coming. Some fortunate men grow callous to this Arcadian custom; I never did, and the artist still less so.

That cautious man had, in fact, either in the first act of retiring or at the first sounds of excitement below, locked our door. But more experience in European travel would have taught him the futility of this exertion. Our uninvited visitors had of course found no difficulty in pushing open a pair of the so-called French windows opening on the veranda.

The first comer danced about the room, advancing and retarding the hat in his hand, pantomiming some outrage that seemed to have been perpetrated upon him. More and more Thebans crowded in through the veranda window; some thoughtful visitor unlocked the door, and faces appeared in the outer hallway, all sorts of faces, a whole hallful of them, in far perspective. From below sounded evidence of conten-

tion about the only entrance to the performance above. At least a score of persons were prancing about in that room built for two; surely a hundred vigorously envied them their advantage. I in my bed, almost in the common-sense garb of Adam, drew but little attention. The artist, gentle soul, with the exaggerated modesty of the properly brought up of a former generation, in half-removed shirt and trousers maintained in approximately their customary position with one agitated hand, was the real focus of the maelstrom. Except for his agile efforts to keep his bare feet out from under heavy and almost certainly hobnailed shoes, his only other sign of life was the telltale evidence of extreme embarrassment that crept from his tortured face down across his manly bosom and up his even less hirsute, if strikingly classical, brow-and-beyond.

I left the whole affair to the artist. There was not only my garb as an excuse, and the agreement that the last man to bed should put out the cat, no matter what form it might take, but it was high time he learned by practical experience how to direct a mob scene in a foreign land. He handled the situation admirably, by simulating extreme stupidity. The mob came gradually to suspect that they had to do with one of their ancient statues, only partly vitalized with the spark of life. People began to pair off and tell each other in high words and pantomime how the catastrophe had happened. The straw-hat man beat himself on the chest with hands and hat. The woman's cackling falsetto strove to correct the versions of a dozen contending couples. The scene was admirably suited to the low-brow stage; it could not have been better movie material if an expert scenario writer had laid it out; Chaplin would have found it a worthy vehicle; Ben Turpin could have played the straw-hat part to perfection.

The audience now filled both balcony windows, threatened

to bring down the veranda it packed. Certain sounds testified that another crowd was gathered beneath the trees in the table-and-chair lined street below; the mob filling the doorway, hall, and stairway might have heard its own ribs crack; in our chamber there was not merely standing room only but not even subway room, and the uproar of every one trying to tell every one else at once in fiery Greek words and such pantomime as one might make in a subway throng at the most crowded hour what it was all about, would have caused a less patient man than the artist to risk our lives by a violent muscular outburst.

Then in burst Chaplin himself. Despite his star part he had evidently had difficulty in forcing his way through the mob from the wings. He was an unshaven, squatty, infrequently soaped individual, holding in his hand an ancient derby. Normally, I should say, he was a meek little man, except, as the artist soon discovered, that he was greatly addicted to garlic. In fact, looking back upon the scene from this probably safe distance, it is still a marvel that we managed to survive that gathering without gas-masks. The star danced about, raced back and forth within such space as unwillingly created itself, thrust his garlic-screaming face into that of the statuesque artist, still desperately clinging to his half-removed shirt and slipping trousers.

Suddenly out of the incomprehensible welter of words the derby man shrieked, "I spika Angleesh!" We were saved! But no, after that one outburst not another word of our beloved tongue could he force over his foaming lips to prove his astonishing claim. With some one to explain—if only the Wyoming Ford man would come in!—we could soon placate these naturally good-natured Greeks.

Instead, Chaplin was using his derby as a basin full of imaginary water to show us all how it had happened. A

score of times he tossed the hatful toward the window; demanded why, every one demanded why, water had been thrown upon him. From the balcony across which the first straw hat and the landlady had come appeared a policeman. He had apparently remained inconspicuously in the chorus as long as possible; he acted now as if he were between the devil and the deep-blue Ægean—half apologetic, since we were foreigners and possibly important beyond our appearance, yet half blustering, too, in order to maintain his standing with the local populace. Behind him pressed for recognition a third plaintiff, with a few drops on his aged coat. Getting scant attention from the officer or the landlady, he addressed himself in fiery words to the wall of faces in the doorway and the balcony openings. The straw-hat man continued to beat himself on the chest, shouting, "Woof! Woof!" The man of the derby, fearing perhaps that the star part might be snatched from him, thumped himself even harder, threw imaginary water more savagely, broke out again in coherent speech:

"Angleesh!" he shrieked, and the crowd took it up after him, making the welkin, or at least the dirty ceiling above us, ring with it, "Angleesh?" Until at last even the artist understood, and answered back with the calm dignity natural to a man of quiet temperament and a clear conscience, not to mention his patriotic pride in the reply, "No! Americans."

"Ah, Amerikhan!" bellowed the Greek chorus—we had supposed every one in that part of Greece knew it long ago—"Amerikhan!"

At last the policeman commanded silence. You could have heard a coupling-pin drop. One of my repeated protests against the unspeakable indignity to my modesty caught his ear; he bade the artist close the door behind him, thereby shutting off nearly half the audience. At his stern command

the balcony throng slowly receded. Then he addressed a long speech to the plaintiffs and the reduced party of witnesses, a stray word and his many gestures, bringing frequent "nays" in excited voices from those still in the room, making his summing up half comprehensible to us. I gathered that he was telling them when, where, and how to make formal complaint, in order to hale us into court in the morning.

Unfortunately, we intended to catch the eight twenty-five express. Under no circumstances did we care to remain longer in ancient Thebes. After all the others were gone, last of all the landlady, still stoutly defending the good name of her hotel, whatever the merits of the case, the policeman went through some pantomime in a respectful attempt to find which of us had perpetrated the nefarious indiscretion. We played stupid as the shortest way out, and finally he, too, went his way, leaving us to muse through the night on the probability of having our short sojourn in Greece cut even shorter by who knew how long a delay of legal import. Had Thebes still been in Turkey, we should of course have been shot at sunrise; or at least we should still be there, waiting to pay our fine. But of this comparative good fortune the untraveled artist was not sufficiently aware to remove the pallor from his recently heated brow-and-beyond.

I had kept in the background all this time, not out of cowardice nor yet from a desire to make the most of a practical joke ready-made for my amusement, as my companion darkly hinted, but rather for the practice it afforded him, the test of how well the training I had given him, on how to handle the excitable races, was being taken to heart; also because one less voice in the uproar made the scene that much shorter. But I had no intention of trying to dodge my guilt when the proper time came. In the morning I would make a clean breast of the whole matter, and let the artist go on to

Athens. Yet at that I was not so sleepless over the future as he, for I knew from long experience that the shrieking races are often much more calm on the morning after.

There was a great hubbub all night, so great a hubbub that you might have thought the town was bent on punishing us by denying us any sleep whatever. Perhaps that was the case; though night is always day, and vice versa, in summer Greece. In the café across the street the most atrocious phonograph in the Balkans, playing most of the time our worst American popular airs—as if, in order to add shame to our punishment, the proprietor or some of his clients were digging among the junked records—went on unceasingly until dawn broke and the roosters, venders, and donkeys could relieve their human prototypes of the task of keeping us awake.

Even after the crowd had dispersed, the cackle of the landlady went on far into the night; endless chatter raged beneath the veranda, even upon it, as though the rest of Thebes had come to behold the scene of the outrage; a perpetually whining puppy, hungry dogs, misinformed cocks, distressed asses, shouting people . . . not to mention the myriad hungry inhabitants of our very saggy beds and lumpy pillows . . . I may once or twice have fallen wholly unconscious from sheer exhaustion, though I doubt it. One often does not all a summer night under even better circumstances.

But in the morning I had to pinch myself to believe it had not all been a hideous, if sometimes humorous, nightmare. When we rose, dressed, tried to shave and wash—being careful to hand each basinful of soiled water to the landlady—and stepped out into the already hot day, all was as calm and serene and quiet as along the Potomac. With a muskmelon under the artist's arm, in true Greek fashion, we strolled down the main street to our restaurant of the tree faucet,

where the youth who had been duly rehearsed in his part the evening before by the man from Wyoming actually cooked eggs for us in accordance with our strange orders.

Men were already gathering at the tables under the sycamore trees for their day's labor of gossiping, playing cards, and drinking alleged coffee. People were drawing water from the slow but perpetual spigots; fruit-sellers were calling their wares up and down the main street and in the one block on each side of it wherein takes place all the public commercial activity of Thebes; bootblacks were crying for trade; mule trains, now and then an automobile, an occasional victoria or an aged closed hack worthy of Turk harem days, went leisurely past.

A policeman slipped by now and then, gently, as if careful not to frighten us; a few bearded and not too recently washed priests went their placid, gown-clad way; natives in all Greek costumes from white, plaited, knee-high ballet skirts to the latest dock-walloper style, sauntered by us. There was some staring, but no more than we always won as strangers in full European garb in any of the smaller towns of Greece.

We wondered if all this serenity was merely the calm before the tornado, whether we should be arrested under dramatic circumstances when we started down the stairs with our baggage. Yet when we did, there was not even a scowl from the man in unwashed whites, with a very sun-faded straw hat on the chair beside him, who sat on the little landing half-way up the stairway which constituted the hotel office. He handed us our bill of thirty-four drachmas with a smile, suggested that it was customary to add ten percent for service, at the same time pointing to the expectant landlady a couple of steps higher, and received forty with an expression of gratitude and esteem. He more than willingly summoned a boy who was delighted to carry our stuff down to the sta-

tion on the plain below for a ragged five-drachma bill from each of us, and bade us a courteous farewell. Yet we could almost have sworn that he was the first soused man to reach our room the evening before, the Ben Turpin of the recent comedy.

All the way down to the station we still half expected to be stopped and dragged off to whatever serves as a police court in modern Thebes. But nothing unwonted broke our morning stroll. Looking back upon it from the calmer height of comparative safety in our own land several months later, our unscathed escape is not quite so astounding as it seemed that morning. What probably happened was that the Ford driver from Wyoming and the admiral station-master had patched up our case during the night. For we had shown them ample proof of our importance. It was an open letter to whom it might concern, which had been furnished us through the good offices of the head of the publicity bureau of the Greek Government, signed by none other than the prime minister, just then, of Greece.

No doubt the two men of Thebes who knew of that letter had not been aware of our suffering until the evening performance was over. But as news of those proceedings was sure to have reached them, nothing was more natural than that they should have told the police and the plaintiffs of our high standing, and that the outraged citizens and the authorities should have decided for the honor of Thebes and the fear of distressing the central Government, already with more than enough problems on its hands, to forget our criminal action. Or it may be that morning light proved the damage not great enough to be worth losing their day's sleep over in order to appear against us.

It is a further commentary on Greek character, however, that not only did we see nothing of the man from Wyoming

but that the station-master kept to the darkest corner of his office until we were gone, rather than be forced again to treat as persons of consequence men who have no doubt lost forever the esteem of their fellow-citizens of ancient THIVAI.

CHAPTER X

MODERN ATHENS

WE ensconced ourselves in another Wagon-Lit express, among glum, well-dressed people strangely in contrast with the old town we had left dozing on its ancient hilltop. Bœotia gave way to Attica—how tiny were those old countries we heard so much more about in school-days than of Russia or China! For a time long spaces of the landscape were nearly bare except for pine-trees, almost pine forests on the flanks of Pentelicon, left because the Greeks must have pitch with which to calk their boats and ruin their wine. Every trunk was scored, an earthenware pot clinging to many of them; great strips of bark had been removed, had grown again, like grafted skin. Then wooded evergreen uplands became less so; olive-trees appeared once more; tobacco (mostly in seed now and resembling fields of ripe onions); and two hours after our trembling descent from Thebes our train was incessantly whistling its way through the flat, endless, new refugee suburbs of Athens.

We had each first seen Athens from the sea, the Acropolis bulking like a gigantic throne above all else. Lykabettos, Hy-mettus, Pentelicon, ash-gray by day, red in the sunset . . . It was like going back to some former existence to see in the flesh those famous landmarks. When first I beheld that historic scene, from Phaleron Bay, three airplanes crawling across it, the hard, stony, burned-out landscape was a shock not easily forgotten. Yet there was still a half-hazy, other-

world atmosphere about it which emphasized a thrill the overseasoned traveler is rarely vouchsafed. Sneaking in at the back door now by train was, naturally, not so impressive.

When it was made the capital of the new Greece in 1834 (Nauplia having first been given that honor), Athens was a poor little village of Greeks and Albanians. In 1870 it had only 44,510 inhabitants; as late as 1907 only 175,000; barely 300,000 when the World War began. No wonder, then, if we were astonished. To-day, including the suburbs and refugee towns that spread far away over the dry hills about it (yet not including Phaleron and the Piræus, which almost any enterprising American city similarly situated would manage to inclose within its confines), there are estimated to be more than a million children of Athena, goddess of wisdom.

A vastly overcrowded city, the Athens of to-day; naturally, since thousands of refugees clutter the downtown section not only with their presence but with shack-shops and makeshift booths wherever the police will permit them. But the worst problem of all that have come with this spectacular growth has been how to supply this multitude with water. Almost all Greece is hard up for water a large part of the year. Thanks to the destruction of her forests by the Turks, perhaps by the ancient Greeks themselves, water is one of the scarcest of commodities, rarely to be had anywhere in Greece for the mere turning on of a faucet.

A crowd perpetually waiting about a trickling public spigot or a dripping spring is a common sight anywhere, from Athens to the most remote island-mountain village; even in the hottest hours of the day, when all Greece is accustomed to crawl away into the shade, you may see long lines of women and children, now and then even a man, standing about hydrants in the broiling sunshine, sometimes fighting about it, and no wonder; and as the carrying of water is

woman's work—like most other jobs except sitting in the coffee-house shade—barefooted women plodding along sharp-stony roads or distressing mountainous trails, bent double under a wooden cask of water as large as our beer kegs of depressing memory, may be met in almost any country district. To the summer traveler in Greece, a canteen is an absolute necessity, even on trains and steamers.

Since the days of Solon, Athens has been short of water; imagine, then, what the sudden multiplying of its population by three or four, perhaps by five has meant. In 1908, when there were hardly a quarter of a million Athenians, and every street was paved, the water supply, if not generous, was at least sufficient for a people long trained to economize on water. The city was much cleaner in those days, say persons who knew it then as well as now; though there has been much improvement, they hasten to add, since three or four years ago, when the refugee problem was at its height. To-day the Government officially allows one quart of water daily per person! Naturally, even Greeks cannot get along on so little. Wells have been dug, privately, in many parts of the suburbs and the new refugee quarters, by Armenians especially, who padlock them and sell the water. Carts filled with artistic red-sealed earthenware jars of water from one of the islands may be traileed from the wharves of Piræus to the last sizable house of Athens.

Of course the favored classes get more than their quart a day. Large homes, wealthy people, hotels, embassies, and the influential in general call upon the fire department to furnish them water whenever a shortage menaces them. But a large part of Athens's present population are not of the favored class. And to keep up a park or a garden in an Attic summer without water is, as a historian of modern Greece has observed, no minor undertaking.

But water is at last in prospect, an adequate supply, from the Near East point of view, though still scanty for any modern civilization that revels in bathtubs and showers. The American company to which was turned over the problem of furnishing Athens with water, at first proposed to bring it from the Stymphalian Lake, where Hercules achieved early fame by destroying the man-eating birds. But it was finally decided to make an artificial lake on the plain of Marathon—some twenty-three miles away, as of course you remember. A dam for storing up rain-water has been built across the mouth of the valley, and a tunnel (eight miles long) and an aqueduct are to bring this supply to the capital.

The people of Athens complain that they have paid, in taxes, for this new water for three years already (the American company perhaps wisely demands its money in advance) but that they still get no succor from the plains of Marathon. But it will require at least another year to complete this distributing system; and meanwhile Hadrian's famous aqueduct has been put in order, that the temporary supply may be increased. The company is making too, it seems, some arrangement to pump up by means of a plant in Phaleron sea-water for the washing of streets and the fighting of fires.

The scarcity of water might matter less if the climate would be reasonable. Stokers should feel perfectly at home in the incessant furnace heat, the devouring sunlight, of Athens. No American who has not been to Greece can possibly visualize its climate, its ash-heap landscape. When I first dropped into Athens, on my way elsewhere, on March 23, it was already a brilliant summer day. When I returned in June it was impossible to stroll three squares without dripping like a wet sponge. The rarest thing in modern Greece is a fleck of cloud. Jupiter Pluvius seems to be an exile from his native land, at least during a long

summer. If this is the same climate as in the days of our school-books, the ancient Greeks merit several times the credit we give them for accomplishing what they did.

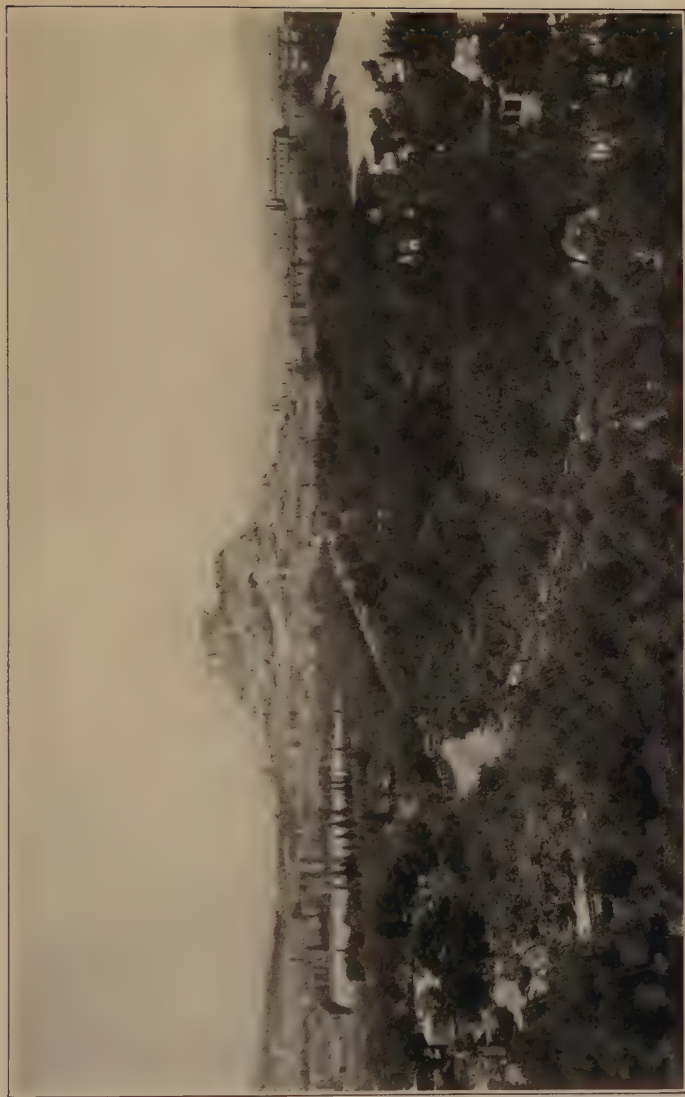
Yet in Athens it is not so much the heat (though that went officially to 116° Fahrenheit in the shade one Sunday, when we had the good luck to be out among the islands) as it is the sun. From the instant you step out in the morning until the old tyrant sinks behind the purple hills of Attica, Apollo's golden chariot seems to pour down upon you an incessant shower of molten metal, which bounds back at you from the pavement even if you carry an umbrella, striking you in the face like a highwayman with a rubber billy. One might fancy Phaethon had been permanently installed as a strike-breaker in the job of driving the celestial horses he managed so badly. I have been in many tropical lands; never have I suffered from the heat as in Greece, particularly in Athens. It was so hot that even the artist and I, who never think of entering such a thing at home, thanks to stout legs and more than a strain of Scotch blood in our veins, patronized taxicabs almost daily in the Greek capital, often for mere child's strolls. I can use no stronger language than that.

To make matters doubly Hadean, mere men are expected to wear at all times in public a coat, nay, even a waistcoat, collar, and tie, and all the other ridiculous sartorial paraphernalia pertaining to the hopelessly conservative sex. A lady, even in Greece . . . But of course that has nothing to do with our suffering. Even in those few country districts where men dare occasionally to discard the coat, they cling to the vest; and of course no continental European can be happy unless his trousers climb well up under his armpits. We were probably mistaken for mere foreign laborers of the lowest class in those out-of-the-way corners where we rebelliously stripped to our shirts. In Athens, or any other

city, this would have verged upon something demanding the death penalty. There, whatever the hour, day or night, the only half-cool place within reach was out on the shore at New Phaleron, where there are rows of shaded chairs and tables, music, beer and its milder relatives, bathing if you like promiscuity, and a fairly constant sea-breeze; but only the self-supporting among these advantages functioned between noon and nearly sunset.

The Greeks themselves never seem to mind the heat. Even in midsummer the men revel in heavy woolen underwear; the old-fashioned country costumes for both men and women include hand-knitted under-things right off the sheep's back, equal to the hair shirts of self-torturers in medieval days. Obligatory coats and vests and high-climbing trousers are usually of wool; the even hotter old costumes, or the monk's gown, in which you or I should faint on the spot, seem to cause their wearers no discomfort whatever. However terrific the heat, mountaineers look placid and comfortable in all the wardrobe left them by their ancestors, encircled amidships by a heavy leather belt of several thicknesses and great width, and in shoes of wood and leather and iron that seem designed as heirlooms to be worn by successive generations, weighing—I lack the courage even to guess how much. Filial Greek sons in the United States send their discarded overcoats to their fathers in Greece, and the latter wear them even at noon and at sea-level in midsummer.

I was at first uncharitable toward the Greeks for dropping all activity and going into a coma from soon after midday until about four in the afternoon, when the rasping of re-opening iron shutters is heard throughout the land. The artist, indefatigable worker in several fields, was openly scornful of such laziness—until he had tried to keep up the



The Acropolis of Athens from the Stadium



The Temple of Theseus is one of the best preserved of the many ancient monuments in Athens



A pillar of the Temple of Zeus lies like a stack of poker chips where washout and wind tumbled it long ago

American pace through a few full days. Besides, we soon discovered, it is not because they are lazy that the Greeks fall asleep during the hottest hours but because they are law-abiding; at least in many cities the law requires all business to cease from half-past twelve to four! One gets so used to the siesta in Greece that it seems incongruous, unlawful, to see windmills, as in Crete, working between one and four; even the blindfolded animals that water the fields with their endless chains of cracked and broken pottery do not.

The golden atmosphere of Athens, yellow as a Mesa Verde hillside, dry as Arizona in midsummer, is delightful as a medium through which to see the world roundabout; but not much else can be said for it. That peculiar witchery of light which nature seems to achieve only in Greece often makes you catch your breath with astonishment, starts you out on walks that prove too long even for experienced legs, makes you feel like a landsman trying to judge distance at sea. The artist said that he had to invent and learn an entirely new technique, because of the extraordinary perspective in this moistureless air. Nor is Greece the best country on earth for the roving photographer; for though there is a bright incessant sunshine, most activities and interesting manifestations of the genus homo take place early or late or in the shade, or at least with the performers' backs turned to the raging sun.

Yet even the sunshine that wallops you on the head from dawn to sunset would be endurable but for the incessant pandemonium of Athens. On my long overland journey from Cairo I had grown used to, or at least learned to endure, those atrocious automobile horns in vogue all about the Mediterranean. The artist, fresh from our own silent land, was restrained with difficulty from turning tail and fleeing back to it almost before he had reached the capital.

Athens is an endless inferno of noise, in which the incessant squawking of those silly little double-action bulb horns, all of the same identical note, with a backdraft like a giant's death-rattle, probably reaches its earthly climax. At least I cannot conceive of mere human beings outdoing the Grecian capital in that hellish respect.

We assumed, as have many wiser and perhaps more charitable travelers, that these horns were due merely to the well-known love of noise among the chattering races. We found there was another and better, or at least more effective, reason for them. A friend of the wife of Pangalos (Mrs. P. having been the real power behind the throne during the late unlamented dictatorship) had a large stock of these bulb horns on hand when the general seized the Government. The stock had not been moving. What was easier, then, or more kindly toward an old friend, than to pass a law requiring every automobile in Greece to be equipped with at least one bulb horn? "The terrible noise" (of the automobile horn we know at home) "frightens people," ran the official explanation of the statute; which does not quite coincide with the contention of the people themselves that our type of horn is not noisy enough to break in upon their attention in time for them to get out of the way. Be that as it may, for some reason the bulb-horn law has never been repealed, though Dictator Pangalos has been languishing these two years and more where horns are rarely heard. The one fact of real interest to visiting foreigners is that while there were at last count 11,222 automobiles in Greece as compared with 23,262,183 in the United States proper, it is not in the least an exaggeration to say that there is more automobile noise in Athens alone than in all our broad land.

However, let us give the devil his due. On the other hand, life is still by no means so cheap in Greece as in our own

hushed fatherland. In all my goings and comings about that ancient country I heard of only one automobile death—a baby girl who ran out on a sloping street, of an island with perhaps a score of cars on it, and fell under the wheels of a descending Ford. One of those deaths that occur every hour from one year's end to the other in the United States, and which are so quickly passed over as "unavoidable." Here, the man was jailed at once, without bail; the car was confiscated. None of our "technical homicide" nonsense; he was charged with killing a human being, with no ifs, ands, or buts appended, and was certain of at least two years' imprisonment, according to an American long resident in Greece, with the likelihood of getting anything up to ten.

So perhaps there is plausible excuse for the ceaseless squawking of the drivers of the Near East; though some of us might prefer to take even our American chances of being bumped into the after-world rather than endure the incessant, retching, seasick clangor of a horizonless ocean of bulb horns. Besides, like the cry of "wolf," where horns never leave off squawking they cease to be a warning and become merely a useless torture.

Add to this the leather-lunged peddlers of every imaginable commodity from spitted chunks of meat to lottery tickets, each bawling his loudest in a vain effort to make himself heard above the blare of horned traffic; the endless chatter of excitable and noise-loving citizens, who pound themselves furiously on the chests with clenched fists and shout at one another with noses a few inches apart when they are merely discussing the price of wine or glorying over Baby's first tooth, and it will be more nearly apparent why Athens is no sanatorium for frayed nerves, why the Greek capital and a good night's sleep are quite incompatible terms.

I shall never forget my first night there, to which I had

long looked forward with dreams of recuperating from the hardships of the road. Next day I moved from a downtown hostelry to the White House Hotel, once a hospital, and with other reasons to recommend it to Americans. But even there, fairly distant from the indescribable uproar of the center of town, siesta-time was mainly a tossing to and fro and night itself a hot and noisy experience rather than a period of rest. The summer traveler in Greece will do well to lay in his supply of sleep beforehand, or plan to gather it after his departure.

If I was disappointed in Athens, the artist was horrified. According to my companion, every man of his calling looks forward to that city as the nearest worldly replica of heaven; the artistic mind is filled with a host of captivating ghosts which the man in the street classifies as visions, specters that had hovered all his life about the magic name of Athens, of Greece. Yet these visions are likely to flee in unseemly haste from the moment the visionary learns that one takes, not a Homeric ox-cart but an electric train, from Piræus to the capital, to find it a Hades of bulb horns, of ultra-modern buildings and commonplace streets swarming with people dressed disappointingly like ourselves. The wrath of his disillusionment was seldom far below the surface. Modern Athens impressed him as a gay and by no means beautiful jade, a flapper in a Parisian outfit, with the incessant hoarse voice of a harridan, whose grandmother, personified in the magnificent old Acropolis, gazes down upon her perplexed and aghast.

For the Acropolis is different; it does not even fail to attain the heights of a lifetime of anticipation. One blistering afternoon, when Athens was quivering in the heat like a caldron of molten brass and our weary footsteps could have been traced by the perspiration that dripped along the red-

hot ascent to it, we made our first visit to the Acropolis. Even if one takes a taxi to the foot of it, one reaches the Parthenon with scarcely ambition enough to give it more than a casual glance. But along its mighty reaches comes a breeze so deliciously cool, compared with the city below, a breeze which plays around the great structure with the strangest of crooning sounds, like a ghostly hymn to its creators, that one's rebellious spirit is rebuked. The artist had reached at last one of the chief goals of his dreams; and he set to painting forthwith. Not a natural nomad, he was not easily convinced that there are other things in Greece worth seeing.

White as if hewn out of the marble quarries of Paros last year, though with enough iron in the marble to give it an undescribably delicate toning of yellows and pinks, contrasted with cold grays due to weathering here and there, the Parthenon, designed and directed by Phidias in the time of Pericles, five centuries before Christ, is still all that the most exacting artist could ask to see. Did the creators of the Parthenon and other masterpieces of Greece count on time and weather as allies to mellow the whole into one incomparable unit? Or is this merely their unforeseen good fortune? Photography gives but a weak impression of the marvelous colors of the great monuments of the past, bathed in the splashing sunshine or the brilliant moonlight of Athens.

And how did the ancient Greeks know that by making a four-inch rise in the long walls of the Parthenon they could do away with the illusion of a dip, offset the perspective by which a long line appears to sag, make those lines straight to the eye by actually curving them upward in the center? It is the astonished artist himself who asks. Floors a little higher in the middle than at the ends and sides, columns

leaned a bit inward to accentuate the feeling of strength and to remove any suspicion of top-heaviness. The artistic exploits of those supermen, whose art must pass muster in the eyes of the gods, are nowhere more fully exemplified than on the Acropolis at Athens.

In spite of having been a target during most of the wars that have since swept over Greece, of having been ruined by an explosion when the Venetians were besieging the Turkish barbarians who used it as a powder magazine, the Parthenon is still a virile, almost a divine, work of art, superb in consummate craftsmanship, infinitely fine in proportion, exquisite in that spiritual quality of art inseparable from the masterpieces of the world. There is about it even to-day a greatness which one can appreciate only by standing in person among the splendid columns, casting densely black shadows, which support those gigantic blocks of marble, the moaning of the cool wind carrying the mind back to the days of Iktinos and Kallicrates, its magic architects.

A half-hearted attempt at restoration is going on at the Parthenon. The west side of the building is partly covered with a scaffolding, already weather-blackened, from which is now and then heard the clink of a hammer on stone. But the somnolent modern descendants of those demigods who built it can never hope to improve it. Not even the ten-cent admission to the Acropolis which makes its crowning glory a peep-show; not even the human pests who roam about it making post-card snap-shots of you against the inimitable background, in the hope of bluffing or wheedling you into buying them, can obliterate the charm of that magnificent pile of marble.

Verily, the ancient hilltop of Athens is worth visiting again and again, even if one is not an artist. The view is at all times superb, sunset from the Acropolis one of the

sublime sights of the world. There has never been but one acknowledged ascent to and descent from the Acropolis; on all other sides it falls sheer away to the Athens of to-day. The former royal palace, now partly a museum, that of the ex-crown-prince, to-day a boarding-house, the circular Zappeion among its trees, the gleaming new stadium, rebuilt of Pentelic marble on its ancient site at the expense of a wealthy Greek of Egypt, fill the middle distance below. Lykabettos with its crowning church stands forth, even higher than the Acropolis with its Parthenon, out of the once mere village which a decade ago did not reach it but which has now grown completely around it, leaving it like a great rock island with its lower half girdled by forest. The air is so transparent that one can see Acro-Corinth, Ægina, the mountains of Morea, lilac color, deepening to purple as night falls, often the ranges about Sparta, sometimes the whole Peloponnesus. Yet perhaps the scene is most beautiful of all toward the sea, the incredibly blue, island-dotted Ægean.

CHAPTER XI

REMINDERS OF THE PAST

MANY reminders of her ancient glory stand—or lie—in the heart of the teeming Athens of to-day. The Theater of Dionysus, god of wine, at the eastern foot of the Acropolis, is still nearly enough intact to carry the imagination back to those halcyon days when a theater was not a stuffy covered building but rows upon rows of stone seats rising up the sun-flooded side of a hill, half encircling a level space below, where plays were acted. Still are, in fact, at rare intervals; though to-day Athens has almost nothing in the theatrical line except foolish shadow dramas from foreign lands. The Temple of Theseus, one of the most nearly intact of the many ancient monuments of Greece, is a favorite siesta-place of the bums of Athens, who care not for the past except as it casts a shadow for their comfort.

It will pay you one day not to try in vain to take a siesta, just to find how many incongruous things of this kind one hot midday stroll or ride will disclose. The bare wind-swept, dust-swirling space across which what is left of the Temple of Zeus throws streaks of black shadow is but another of many napping-spots for the homeless of Athens. Not always homeless, either, perhaps; it is a long way from the shops and offices that close, during the middle of the day, to some of those newer suburbs out on the distant hillsides. What care these sleepers that one of the pillars of Zeus's temple still lies where washout and wind long ago tumbled it like

the blocks of a child's house knocked over with an impatient hand? No more than the drivers of the veritable American procession of automobiles and auto-buses along the broad macadam highway on which it faces care that Hadrian's Arch near by looks dizzy from their gasoline fumes.

Athens from Lykabettos is also a sight worth climbing to see, though it is wise to get up early that morning. For not only is the heat a trifle less hellish at sunrise, but a mixture of mist and smoke veils the city later in the day; and while you may then still see even to the mountains of Sparta, the camera catches but little of what the eye embraces from this height. The view of the Acropolis from Lykabettos is something long to be remembered. In fact, from almost any high point in Athens or its environs the Parthenon-crowned rock hill stands forth magnificently. Perhaps the only equally magnificent sight in Greece is Athens and the Lykabettos from the Acropolis.

We climbed Lykabettos on my—no, I shall not tell you which—birthday; it is high time I began to be coy and feminine on that painful subject. Naturally there was an eclipse of the sun that morning, though even that did not make the climb an autumn excursion. Within the ikon-crowded little church at the summit, an aged priest was mumbling endlessly to the gods, a score or two of pious climbers, almost entirely of the reputedly fair sex, alternately standing and kneeling behind him. The chapel was tinted yellow, and in the fierce sunlight, silhouetted against the sky's blue dome, it smote the eye like a flame. An isolated wooden belfry strained its legs to hold aloft the great bell whose booming now and then dispelled our broken sleep a dozen squares away.

That afternoon we found hundreds gathered on the rocky hill below the Acropolis from which Saint Paul addressed

the Athenians. For as usual the anniversary of my distinguished birth coincided with the day sacred to the wandering tent-maker of Tarsus. A religious procession, of both sexes, all ages, and every social status, in which many huge ornate banners were carried—if it ever got started—was coagulating. Long before that we had wandered on past the near-by Areopagus, where a chamber cut in the side of a rock hill is called the prison of Socrates. Vagabonds seem to make this also a rendezvous. But there was no evidence in it that the Athens of to-day sentences its undesirable citizens to drink hemlock.

The oldest part of modern Athens, lying close about the foot of the Acropolis, is deeply gashed by the curving trench of the electric line to Piræus. It is the finds made during this excavation, I understand, which led the American School of Classical Studies at Athens to undertake the uncovering of all that section. Millions of dollars and years of time will be required for this undertaking. A considerable portion of the city must be expropriated; hundreds of buildings moved off; new homes found for some ten thousand people. Greece has already known a similar wholesale moving. When the French undertook the uncovering of Delphi, the village of Castri was picked up bodily, though withal piecemeal, and carried away around a spur of the mountain, so that the ancient calm of Greece's once holiest place should not be broken by the sights, sounds, and smells of modern life.

In Athens the task is several times greater. No fewer than seven medieval churches, one of them reputed the oldest in Athens, another a Byzantine gem standing on the site of the Agora, or ancient market-place, and all of them picturesque, will have to give way in this search for the secrets of an older past. Tourist-famous Shoe Lane and twenty-five adjoining houses, just north of the Areopagus and about five

hundred feet west of the Acropolis, will be the first to go. The walls of the library of Hadrian, against which the cells of a modern prison have been built, rise not far beyond. The columns of several old temples protrude from the ground; the descriptions of Pausanias, the Herr Baedeker of ancient Athens, and certain inscriptions that have already been found, lead the excavators to hope that they may discover the remains of the royal Stoa (which might contain the first drafts of the early laws of Athens), and perhaps the temples of Zeus, Ares, and naughty Aphrodite.

All as it should be, no doubt. Minor excavations and illicit digging, family finds and archæological bootlegging prove that much of interest to the archæologist will be uncovered, even if few precious objects of a portable kind are likely to have survived the repeated lootings of Athens from the time of Xerxes to that of Lord Elgin, especially the thievery of the Eastern emperors, who removed quantities of works of art to Constantinople. But it will be a mild pity to wipe out those narrow little side streets, with their crowded miniature shops of sometimes authentic antiquities, of pompon-topped slippers, of round loaves like giant doughnuts, of leather bags and other Greek imitations of better workmanship elsewhere, which the wise stroller will do well to amuse himself in bargaining for rather than actually purchasing.

Many touches of totally unconscious art in those quaint side streets of this older part of Athens, beneath the shadow of the Acropolis. They may be poor; from our point of view they certainly are indolent, yet the Greeks of the poorer section of the capital—of any wayside village, for that matter—are unconsciously artistic, and as fond of flowers as are the Japanese or the Mexicans. Flowers adorn the tiniest, newest suburban refugee hovels; bushes of pink, sometimes of white, oleanders grow in the most unlikely corners; a

public auto-bus plying past our hotel had growing flowers in a pot in its every window. Yet there is no such commercialized flower business in Greece as that in which so many Greeks are engaged in the United States.

Every step is a new revelation, in this slum section, every glimpse into a tiny yard through a little doorway reason for envy. Is it inherited instinct or some mysterious unwritten law, that prompts a grimy denizen of a little alley with offensive drains to place a huge earthenware vase in exactly the right spot, to grow a fig-tree and a vine unerringly as a frame for a wrought-iron grille or a patch of gorgeous blossoms, to daub some paint on a door or a window-frame in a way that a master painter could not have improved? These glimpses of artless art were everywhere shoulder to shoulder with the dismal side of slum life. The delightful irregularity of these little courtyards, which makes every glance into them a pleasure, are apparently not due to study or attempt; yet they are far more genuinely artistic than all the laborious efforts of our millionaires.

Beside the huge ornate but commonplace Metropolitan, or chief church, of Athens in this older district stands Panagia Gorgoepikos, a most charming little Byzantine church of great age, made of many historical fragments and ancient materials from many sources. Sunk in a cemented space within a large square surrounded by buildings that would not look out of place in the older sections of Paris, it bursts upon the heat-languishing stroller much as does a sudden sight of big game upon the weary jungle-struggling hunter.

But the genius which produced truly artistic things even as late as this seems to have dried up in modern Greece. For all the delightfully artless art of the common people, when they try, the Greeks of to-day seem to have the most indifferent success. Modern Greek art is an elusive muse; it

seems to have little in common with the masterpieces of its distant past. Greece, once famed for its art, now accepts the most dreadful chromos in the world as worth hanging. To judge from what has been dug up and in many cases preserved, the old Greeks also made some dreadful stuff; but at least there were many good things among it, which can hardly be said of present-day productions by Greek "artists."

The walls of ambitious coffee-houses, of the best restaurants of Athens, howl with "art," mostly wretched copies or imitations of modern French paintings. In the otherwise pleasant dining-room of "the best hotel in the Balkans" at Salonika, the walls are covered with great paintings of naked or half-naked women which must torture the souls of the ancient Greeks. Acres of wall space and tons of paint have contributed to these huge murals, yet the art world has not in the least profited by them. Prominent places are adorned with stuff almost as bad as the atrocities with which our popular illustrators deface the covers and pages of our most widely read magazines. Perhaps the traditions and relics of a mighty past have discouraged all initiative in the race living to-day in the shadow of Praxiteles and Phidias. But it is so much better not to illustrate at all if you cannot illustrate well.

To the artist there is inspiration in Greece at every turn, but as often in the little side streets as in the elaborate museums. The delightful but absurdly low-priced pottery of to-day, suggesting a survival among the masses of the ancient art instinct, was one of the artist's many weaknesses. His trunk would have been filled with the crude, dirt-cheap, beautiful earthenware of modern Greece, had he not fortunately been as trunkless as an amœba. Tiny shops overflow the sidewalks, carelessly strew the curbs with pottery worthy to display its primitive beauty on museum shelves. Fruit-stands

line the streets, hide the corners of many a miserable little village, with great palettes of luscious color. Yet in all our labyrinthine tour of Greece and its islands we saw only one other artist sketching, and he seemed to be hopelessly under the influence of the modernist microbe.

There are, of course, many artistic delights in the National Museum of Athens, just in front of our hotel. But if three fourths of the stuff in it were thrown into the trash-barrel, or at least given to some deserving private collector, the rest would benefit. Some splendid things but also much rubbish, in the many museums scattered about Greece; inimitable masterpieces of the past, and many a commonplace gentleman, and not a few ladies, in stone, who seem to have mistaken a museum for the bathroom; acres of the bygone world's rubbish; and more sleepy caretakers than visitors.

Greece takes her ancient art very seriously, perhaps because she has so few worth-while things of the present; produces, accomplishes so little worthy of high praise to-day. Then, too, some people are so enamored of old stuff that they worship anything, cracked or whole, just so long as it can be called an antique. Geniuses at restoration reconstruct whole scenes, including a dozen life-size figures, from a two-inch patch of stone—the "Amazons" at Olympia, for example. The museums of modern Greece contain old bowls enough to feed (except that most of them might leak) cream of wheat to all the infants on earth, vases sufficient to hold all the flowers at a Chicago gangster's funeral.

In certain moods, such as may be induced by too long sight-seeing in the Grecian summer heat, the museums suggest an old garret filled with junk that should long since have been thrown away. Many a little city has a big stone museum, with an unshaven guardian, and not enough in it to be worth housing, to say nothing of guarding. Tons of broken jars

and vases and even more intimate household vessels of long ago have been carefully, almost religiously preserved. They remind one of those decreasing old-fashioned housewives who save up all their broken china, intending some day, which never comes, to get it mended; make you wonder if all our broken water pitchers, all the bottles the milkman drops on the pavement, all the trash from our kitchen-middens, are some day to be picked up and reverently patched and laid away in a sacred place, with an imposing building over them and a lot of languid old fellows to watch them, to follow about a few often as languid visitors, and the children of those later comers to our temporary lodging told at home and at school how important it is to study them. Surely it behooves us to destroy entirely rather than simply to throw out the broken pieces. No telling what one's rubbish will report, how one's waste-basket may betray one to posterity.

Museum guards should be allowed to knit, it seems to me. They could watch the treasures at the same time, and not give the visitor quite so strong a feeling of being suspected for a thief. Knitting would fit the character of most of them; it would do away with that sense of waste which most of us feel when we see them squatting on their stools or pussyfooting slowly behind some innocent onlooker; and it would be a godsend to the poor fellows themselves in helping them to keep awake. Of course they might accomplish the same ends by writing for publication during their spare moments. But there are so many of us scribbling already, and knitted things are often more or less useful.

But once more we are skating off on a tangent that leads to cynicism. Let's to the main road again. Of course there are some wonderful things in the museums of Greece, relics that carry one bodily back four thousand years—that crude

cross-cut saw from Knossos in Crete, for instance; you can just see a pre-Christian father and son sweating over their respective ends of it. Several museums have some excellent vases; but they would be so much more so if the mediocre and worse could be taken away and the masterpieces left to stand alone.

Many of the lesser exhibits would be interesting in another environment, too, as a good-looking girl is worth gazing upon when she is not in competition with a real beauty. Unlike the heroine of a musical comedy, the best museum pieces do not need to be surrounded by less attractive prototypes in order to bring out their full beauty. As they are now, the museums of Greece give one the impression of the commonplace crowd hiding the few naturally outstanding individuals; and one could do the weeding out so much more easily in a museum than in a human throng.

Chaperoned by a real artist, I was soon convinced of what I had long suspected, that though the Greeks of old so liked to have everything about them pleasing to the eye that even the coarsest earthenware dish was often decorated as if it were a silver vase, there was much bad art among the good in ancient Greece. My artist companion did not give every sculptor of olden days hundred-percent marks in modeling; did not fall down in worship before all the carefully guarded relics of antiquity. Besides torsos he raved over, there were others he would not have passed a twelve-year-old art student on; yet the others, too, are religiously preserved and almost equally honored by the masses with the really excellent—much as in life itself. His common-sense view of art was an excellent antidote for the all but universal custom of believing everything we are told, of accepting the judgments of the past instead of exercising our own. He gave me hints of artistic touches I should never have noticed, partly be-



The artist reaches at last one of the chief goals of his dreams



The Parthenon is being leisurely restored



The Acropolis from the Temple of Theseus

cause this was his first trip abroad. But he gave me also an occasional beneficial shock by condemning something the world has venerated ever since it was dug up out of the mud of the Dark Ages. Discrimination is a rare and splendid gift.

In animated street scenes the Athens of to-day has more to offer in the amusing than in the impressive line. Rarely indeed is one of the old costumes, so common in many other parts of the country, seen in the capital—except, of course, on the president's body-guard. Those stately and if possible handsome young men from the taller sections of the country still wear a picturesque old costume which is probably Turkish rather than medieval Greek in its origin: a red turban-cap with a long black horsetail of silk, a navy-blue smock-jacket, white skin-tight trousers intersected by blue garters, and red shoes, incongruously decorated on top with pompons in the national colors and so hobnailed that the wearers seem to be attached to pedestals. But the rest of the city has nothing in its dress to distinguish it from many other cities in Europe.

Come to think of it, even the ancient Greeks wore canes, hence it is not surprising that modern Athenian gentlemen should consider a stick as necessary to good breeding as a cravat. Pericles would no more have thought of venturing abroad without his cane than without his seal-ring; to-day Kalapothakis would sooner be seen without his waistcoat than unprotected against a possible barking dog.

Policemen wear gray-bluish uniforms and carry swords. They usually belong to the army, from which the best recruits seem to be picked for this service, and in which they are better groomed. Traffic cops wave each separate vehicle forward with what looks like a fly-swatter in the national colors. Firemen, even country gendarmes, belong to the army, unless I am misinformed. In this case the service is three years, the pay better, the work more agreeable, and the men

are not compelled to live in barracks. The modern Greek youth, by the way, is expected to serve his country all but gratuitously for at least eighteen months; and sad, unpromising, rather soiled young men in uniform some of them are, lounging about the cities or moving hither and yon in rather disorganized order to wherever their superiors feel there is danger of a Pangalist or a Bolshevist uprising. To see an average collection of Greek conscripts is to wonder no longer that the Turks chased them out of Anatolia so easily.

I saw again in Athens three smiling Chinese women, in bound feet and exactly the costume they wear at home, oiled hair and all, whom I had already seen in Constantinople. They were Northerners, too, who do so little traveling, as not only their bound feet but the fact that I could talk a little with them proved. Nor were they begging or accepting charity, but stood in the streets selling those ingenious but flimsy toys to be found in the markets of China. So you see, not even bound feet, or long racial conservatism, will keep a woman with the wanderlust from wandering.

CHAPTER XII

PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT

MODERN Greece, as of course you know, is a resuscitated nation. Once, not so long ago, it was as dead as a door-nail—which, for some reason, means very dead indeed. I shall not be so presumptuous as to try to check up on your knowledge of ancient Greek history; but I shall risk the charge of being officious by reminding you of some of the recent events in that territory.

We have heard of Moslem conquests ever since our early school-days. Greece was one of those conquests, yet, near as it is to us, few of us have ever really recognized just what Moslem conquest means. Only those who have wandered far and wide among the Greeks can realize how they have been influenced, in customs, character, point of view, nay, even costumes, by their centuries under the Turks.

A century ago there was no Greece; it was as non-existent as King Tutankhamen. In 1830 it was tiny; in 1864 it added unto itself the Ionian Islands; Thessaly came back in 1881, Crete and the eastern Ægean islands, Epirus and Macedonia in 1913, Thrace in 1920—though the eastern part of that was lost again. The resurrected nation might, in fact, now include Cyprus had King Constantine been spry enough to accept the offer of England when she was hardest pressed, instead of allowing his country to be driven, later on, by the mere force of circumstances into doing for nothing what England once very much wanted it to do.

Doubled geographically by the Balkan war of 1912 and the World War, Greece has since seen her mouths-to-feed greatly increased. By the disaster of Smyrna in 1922 and the terms of the exchange-of-populations clause of the Treaty of Lausanne, which expelled something like half a million Turks from what is now Grecian soil, not only were more than a million and a half Levantine Greeks poured in upon the mother country, but many Armenian and other Christian refugees also. In other words, a country of barely fifty thousand square miles, smaller than Alabama, not quite so large as New York State, and already crowded with some five million inhabitants, was called upon to receive overnight more than a million and a half fellow-countrymen who had suddenly fled from Turkey, many of them completely empty-handed.

You can't, of course, fully realize the calamity of an instantaneous twenty-five percent increase in population in a land short on arable soil where there are already far too many people; for in our spacious and still largely virgin country we have never come within cannonading distance of such a problem. We do not even know what overcrowding is; though we are beginning to sense the possibility of it in the distant future, as witness our anti-immigration laws. The misfortune that befell Greece was as if we, with a vastly smaller and less resourceful country than we have, had suddenly to take in more than thirty million Americans, mainly women and children and old men, who had been chased out of China or Mexico or Canada, most of them penniless, their property in the land they had left confiscated—and that on top of ten years of continual military efforts and internal dissension and many other troubles.

For in summing up the difficulties which the Government of Greece to-day faces, we must remember that the Greeks

have been under arms longer than any other modern power, Turkey alone excepted. Greece mobilized with the other Balkan States against Turkey in 1912, employed all her strength until late in 1913, and had not completed her demobilization when the World War began. In 1919, when the rest of the world was demobilizing, the Greek army occupied Smyrna, and engaged in its grandiose attempt to wrest from the Turks even more of Asia Minor than the Allies had awarded, with the disastrous result which made 1922 the saddest year in the history of the new Greece.

Following the Smyrna debacle, a military revolution again drove out King Constantine, who died in exile a year later. His son Alexander, who succeeded him, succumbed to the little less distressing fate of being bitten to death by a monkey. The strongly anti-royalist National Assembly compelled King George, Alexander's brother, to quit the country, and announced the abolition of the monarchy. In March, 1924, it voted for the establishment of a republic, and eventually elected to the presidency Admiral Koundouriotis, a figurehead who still holds that position, though there have been intervals when he was out, notably during the Pangalos episode.

The never ratified Treaty of Sèvres had given Greece all Thrace to the Bosphorus, except only Constantinople and a triangular district, forty by thirty miles, about it. But after the Anatolian disaster of 1922, the Treaty of Lausanne returned to Turkey eastern Thrace as far as Adrianople. Moreover, Kemal compelled an agreement under which the Greeks in Asia Minor were "exchanged" for the Turks living in Greece. During the centuries when all Greece was under the sultans, Greeks had spread far to the eastward; now they were forced to come home again. Many had been away a dozen generations or more, and in numerous cases spoke

only Turkish. The Greeks of Anatolia and those of Greece were strangers; the former were as alien as are the descendants of those Americans from our Southern States who went to Brazil after our Civil War, who in many instances speak nothing but Portuguese. Most of them had, to be sure, kept their religion. In fact, those who did not had been absorbed into the Turkish population. But in other ways they are almost another people.

Well, at least, say the Greeks, we are now a homogeneous population. Except for some Turks in eastern Thrace—who were excepted, like the Greeks established in Constantinople before 1918, from the compulsory exchange of populations—the Jews in Salonika, some Rumanians and Bulgarians in Macedonia, and a few Albanians, mainly in Chamuria, there are only Greeks left in the Greece of to-day. In all, only about three hundred thousand aliens remain out of a population of six and a half or seven millions.

The inhabitants of Greece are very largely agricultural, though of late other forms of industry have been making some progress. Most of the Greeks from Anatolia were town dwellers—or at least half town dwellers, what we might call suburbanites or commuters, in that many of them had a garden in addition to their main job in town. The Turks being farmers or warriors, the Christians in Turkey were the merchants and the craftsmen. Besides, only in the newer parts of Greece were more farmers needed. The great majority of the agricultural refugees were sent to Macedonia and Thrace, especially the former, in which the population has been almost doubled. Some towns there completely changed populations; Nestos, once Sari-Saban, for instance, had ninety-eight percent Turks in 1912 and now has one hundred percent Greeks. Few refugees were sent to the islands, already difficult places in which to earn a livelihood,

except to Crete, where whole villages were evacuated by Turks and occupied by repatriated Greeks.

Unfortunately, the peninsula from which the ancient Hellenes, wild men from the banks of the Danube, chased the Pelasgians some four thousand years ago, is so rocky and mountainous that only one fifth of it is arable. There being so little land available for the returned Greeks in Greece proper, every Grecian city now has its refugee section. Row after row of small tile-roofed houses stretch up the slope behind Xanthi, cover the outskirts of every town of importance I was to visit thereafter. Athens, Salonika, Piræus, and most other cities have whole new suburbs, soldierly files of red-tiled houses of a room or two each, sometimes alternating with thatched roofs, suburbs in some cases larger than the cities themselves a few decades ago. Though street cars reach few of them, there are bus lines to most of these suburban refugee towns.

Turned out by the thousand, the refugee houses seem foreign to the landscape; real cities in some senses, but uniform and characterless before individuals have put the personal touch upon them. The new sections resemble Jewish suburbs on Long Island, though they are rarely of wood, so widely used in that part of Turkey about Constantinople. Outside, most of them look better than the houses of Anatolia. Here are good roofs and often whitewashed walls; there, thanks mainly to the tax-collector, dwellings have an ultra-neglected air. But distance lends enchantment. On closer view most of them have only earth floors, unless and until the inmates put in a better one themselves; many still have no furniture, not even a bed in the house, and nearly all the inmates are very poor and very crowded. The colonial commission assigns space according to minimum requirements; a man and wife with one or two children may get only one

room. Yet many of these people had lived in luxury in Anatolia for generations.

Nor did these new suburbs by any means suffice. Almost every demoted mosque in the land is divided, by dirty burlap curtains as partitions, into many family apartments; for a long time every box in the Municipal Theater of Athens housed a family of refugees from Asia Minor. Many of the public squares of Athens, as of most of the other cities of Greece, are cluttered with the booths or makeshift shacks of refugees struggling to earn a living as merchants. Having been given the right to run up shack-shops anywhere that available space existed, they surround, sometimes completely cover, parks, city squares, rare vacant lots, often completely cutting off from the streets the shops of long-established merchants; and in their eagerness to get started again, the former residents of Asia Minor cut prices and take profits away from other merchants, who pay rent.

On the whole the Greek Government has handled the refugee problem well. In her bitter hour of 1922, Greece appealed to the League of Nations for help. The Colonial Department, through an English and an American loan backed by the Government of Greece, and using land taken from the departed Turks, made it possible to build new houses, the money advanced to be returned in yearly rentals. Many refugees have already paid for their new homes; owning a house is the average Greek's greatest longing. But many have not yet got their feet firmly on the ground in the new environment.

Some of them are beginning to get some money, or at least bonds, for the property they left behind, the Government obtaining the necessary funds from confiscated Turkish property in Greece. By the terms of the Lausanne Treaty properties were also eventually to be exchanged. But not

only is the Kemal government doing its best not to live up to that clause—except in the case of Greeks who are Italian subjects, as in the island of Rhodes—but the Greeks were forced to abandon, in Turkish territory, several times the wealth which expelled Turks left in Greece.

Then, too, the exchanged Turks, after the manner of their kind, burned in many cases door- and window-frames and all other wooden parts of the houses they left behind them, destroyed everything destructible, so that while all property once owned by the exiled Turks is in theory free to the repatriated Greeks, most of the abandoned houses are uninhabitable. The always serious water problem was made doubly so because the Turks neglected or deliberately ruined stone conduits, filled in wells; and for centuries the Turks had brought their water long distances on donkeys or the backs of women. Malaria also was a great scourge; the American Red Cross alone contributed several *tons* of quinine.

At the latest report the Refugee Settlement Commission, established in 1923 with the approval of the League of Nations, had built nearly half a million houses on land provided by the Greek Government, had spent about \$80,000,000 to establish in agriculture and industry Greeks obliged to leave other countries as a result of the wars and subsequent treaties. The Council of the League supervises the operations of the commission, and appoints two of its members, one of them an American. The same American company which obtained the contract for the Athenian water supply has now been awarded that for irrigation works and the draining of swamps in Macedonia and Thessaly. It began in 1926 the reclamation of the Vardar River marshes beyond Salonika, which is expected to bring 326,000 acres under cultivation.

A million and a half refugees naturally add to the pro-

duction—and the consumption—of tobacco, cereals, and the like. New factories have been started—clocks, silk, rugs, and other textiles. There was no real carpet-making in Greece before 1916. In fact, there seem still to be few handicrafts in that country, unless the handling of tobacco is one. Now thirty thousand refugee women and girls earn their living at rug-weaving. The Greeks were the principal rug-weavers of Anatolia. Turkey has lost also the best designers, who were Greeks or Armenians. As in the case of Spain when she expelled the Jews, and of France in the seventh century when she drove the Huguenots into the Protestant countries and with them the silk and allied industries in which she had hitherto enjoyed a monopoly, Turkey has bitten off her nose to spite her face, and is no longer a place of importance in the rug industry.

The best rugs have 193,600 knots per square meter—try that on your abacus—and the best refugee women tie an average of twenty thousand knots a day! Rug-making is not a mere trade but an art, of individual inspiration, in new designs and colors, and is handed down from generation to generation. It furnishes the best way out of the present difficulties, since the looms are simple and require little capital. Two large cylinders of wood, one above and another below, on which the warp is stretched, will occupy two females. To-day most of the rug-making is centered at Ionia, a new refugee suburb of Athens, though it is spreading to other parts of the country. But they are no longer the rugs of yesteryear. The use of herb juices and the roots of wild plants, which produce glorious colors defying time, has now given place to synthetic alizarine, in Greece and most Oriental countries. Also most rugs are now chemically washed, which reduces their life to a third or a fourth that of the old rugs.

Then there is enamel, which the ancient Greeks learned from the Assyrians and used to great advantage—see almost any Greek museum. For centuries that was a lost art, except in China, until the Persians became masters of it and taught it to the Armenians, who fled persecution there seven hundred years ago and went to Turkey, and now to Greece. But the product is by no means equal to that of olden days.

To add to the problem, there are many work-shy refugees, owing to habit, nature, or discouragement, to say nothing of depression and undernourishment. Yet there is very little begging or crime in Greece, considering the number of refugees and their condition and experiences, and the fact that before the wars Greece had enough artisans of most kinds and more than enough small traders.

Upon their arrival the refugees were naturalized *en masse* by act of Parliament. But many of them regret the loss of their constitutional protection, known as the capitulations, in the old Turkish Empire. Now that they are back in Greece, they realize the extra power in small numbers, recognize that they were in a way better off in the alien land where their votes really meant something, just as foreigners in China will realize more than ever after they have lost it what an advantage extraterritoriality is to them.

For the Ottoman State divided its subjects according to religion, not race; the Koran and the laws of the empire were so bound together that non-Moslems could not be ruled by them. Thus all Greeks *of the Orthodox religion* in Turkey were governed in most matters by the Greek patriarch in Constantinople, who was the head of the Greek "nation" during the centuries that—because the Turks held all the country—Byzantium was also the capital of Greece. In fact, most Greeks still look upon Constantinople rather than Athens as their natural capital.

The patriarch was elected by the laity and clergy of the entire Greek community, though he received his investiture from the sultan. He had complete temporal power in religious, educational, and domestic matters. Many have thought he should have returned to Greece, to Mount Athos, for instance, where he would no longer be in danger from or under the influence of the Turks. But Byzantium is the traditional seat of the Eastern Church; moreover, the Greeks still dream of some day acquiring Constantinople, and the spiritual head of their nation remains there as a kind of peg to indicate the staking of their claim.

It is rather generally admitted that the Greeks from Asia Minor are brighter, have more energy and initiative than those who have always lived in Greece proper. Persecution seems to have quickened them, at least commercially, as it has the Armenians and the Jews. Many arrived without shoes, and now have most of the business in the quarters where they set up shop. There is a strong suspicion that they may before long get the Government also into their hands, not entirely to the Government's disadvantage.

It was vacation time when I was in Greece. But I saw some proof and heard much testimony to the effect that the schools in what is now Greece were better in Turkish days, as are those Greek schools still in Constantinople. For then, as there now, they were run by the communities, under the rather benign rule of the patriarch, and there was no politics, no political-minded Minister of Education to interfere. The Greeks paid for their own schools, and paid taxes on them to the Turks, who as usual did not mind so long as they got their rake-off. The refugees insist that their children were better off, at least in educational matters, in Turkey.

The complaint of the Governor-general of Macedonia to the Mayor of Salonika on the "pitiful state" of the schools

in that city was printed in the local French papers during one of my visits there. Ten years of fighting, followed by the refugee problem and attendant difficulties, had left schools far from what they should be, the mayor admitted. He asserted that visitors would be asphyxiated in some of the overcrowded school-rooms, with an average of only one cubic meter per pupil instead of the seven which health authorities insist are necessary. One hundred and fifteen pupils were striving to improve their minds within sixty-two cubic meters of space, in one instance. Twenty thousand of the pupils of Salonika studied in distinctly unhygienic quarters; five thousand children of school age could find no room in any school. He asked that six million drachmas be allowed for school construction.

In his reply, the governor-general cited the sacrifices and enthusiasm of village populations in Macedonia, who in many cases had built schools costing several times the amount allowed them by the Government for that purpose; that fifty of them had in fact built schools without any government help whatever. He did not add that these more enterprising communities were made up almost entirely of refugees from Asia Minor, while the government of Salonika, in spite of the vast influx of refugee population, is still in the hands of the pre-war citizens. But it was not difficult to read some such hint between the lines. To a certain extent school conditions in the Macedonian capital appear to be typical of all Greece.

Repatriated Greeks also look back with regret to the communal hospitals they were forced to leave behind in Turkey. The American Women's Hospitals, maintained by contributions from the women doctors of the United States, are the only ones in many parts of Greece. The few others, in Athens, Salonika, and one or two other cities, are noted

mainly for their lack of efficiency. In spite of a climate that would seem to obviate it, tuberculosis is increasing rapidly, especially in the refugee communities. There were ten thousand deaths from this disease in Athens in 1926. Crowding, insistence on completely shutting out the "dangerous" night air, and lack of precautions are the main causes, it is said, while more than one Greek mother has been known to abandon a child if she is told it has tuberculosis, and native nurses will not often go near any one suffering from that ailment.

The government attitude toward sanitation or isolation of such cases seems to be summed up in the reply of the Governor of Thrace, of a year or so of incumbency, to the American woman who has been doing almost all the medical work there for a generation. When told of a case for which there was no room in the American hospital, he countered, with a snort of scorn, "Well, what can I do about it? Do you expect me to take the sick girl you mention into *my* house?" The obvious answer would have been, "Yes, it is much more your duty to do that than it is ours to come over here and furnish your people free medical service." But missionaries are all-suffering and usually turn the other cheek, in many cases probably unwisely.

CHAPTER XIII

REPUBLICAN HELLAS

WITH the repatriated Greeks came many Armenians, also driven out of Turkey. Their huts may be seen clinging like mushrooms against city walls, lolling along sandy uncultivated beaches, crouching at the foot of two-story houses inhabited by better-to-do people of their own race. They have been given until a now imminent date to choose between Greek citizenship and departure from the country. They may go to Armenia or anywhere else where they will be admitted—provided they can get there. "But I wouldn't send a dog to Armenia," they will tell you. "There, people live in holes in the ground, like . . ."

But they are a frankly outspoken people, the Armenians, at least in a tongue they speak only imperfectly; so the apparently quite justified comparison had best remain incognito. Besides, Armenia is now completely under the thumb of Soviet Russia, except that portion of it which was stolen by the Turks under Kemal. The United States being impossible, most of them prefer South America, where they are both welcome and virtually assured of a future. It costs ninety dollars to send an adult there and give him a new start in life. But though the fund needed for the restoration of the Parthenon was several times oversubscribed, very little money has been forthcoming toward establishing on a self-supporting basis the Armenian refugees who scrape through their existence almost within the shadow of it.

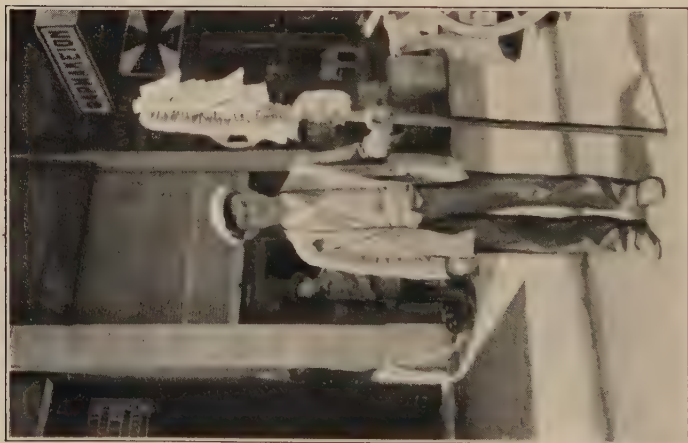
Rather too bad that the thousands of unneeded dollars could not have been diverted to restore an ancient race, the first to embrace Christianity, and likely to be the last to abandon it, judging by its tenacity under persecution. But perhaps all is as it should be. It may be that great monuments of the past are of more importance than the commonplace living, everyday persons in soiled garments much less interesting than ancient stone masterpieces; just as millions impounded in museums seem to give greater satisfaction to our departed multimillionaires than some genuine help for the fellow-countrymen who boosted them to their monetized pedestals.

Life—or at least earning a living—is hard in Greece, even without the recent great influx of population. As in Constantinople, in so many cities of the Orient, the visitor from our spacious land gets the impression that there are too many people. Swarms of men vegetate in their little shops, ready to pounce out like more or less harmless rats upon every possible client. Men who look as if they might be somebody where opportunity offers, wander about in rags, selling lottery tickets, a few oranges, some bread rings dotted with caraway seeds, suggesting slender doughnuts, in keeping with the emaciated sellers.

Especially on the islands is one struck by the surplus of men lying about, labor to be had almost for the asking. They remind one of the *libérés*, or “free” prisoners, of French Guiana. Allowed to go wherever they like on the island, yet for financial reasons unable to leave it, they wander disconsolately about as if they had long since lost all hope of finding something to do. Many of the Greek islands are an example in petto and a warning of what may happen to the world at large in the not too distant future unless greater attention is given to moderating the birth-rate, or its more



Lykabetos rises like a rocky island in the midst of modern Athens



The sellers of lottery tickets add to the general
dim of Grecian cities



The president's body-guard wears an old Greek costume

hardy ally, the killing off of the surplus, continues to be invoked.

All Greeks now admit that it was a great mistake to let the bug of over-ambition bite them, and push on into Anatolia. They say, too, that England and France got them into the Smyrna affair—though you and I of course know that it was also partly due to their covetousness and not unjustifiable desire for revenge on the Turk—that the big nations are always getting the Balkan countries to fighting, in order to sell them munitions. It is not quite so simple and straightforward as that, to be sure; but that is near enough to suffice as a concise statement of the unfortunate facts. Yet the Smyrna disaster did the Greeks good. Now they are up on their toes, and having been so radically treated for, and perhaps cured of, the dread disease known as colony-seeking, they can concentrate on their home problems.

Many Greeks will tell you that their country needs a Mussolini. Pangalos tried to be one, but he lacked the ability to stare or some other little asset that makes all the difference between a dictator and national god and a cell in the prison-fortress of Crete. Almost any Greek, especially if he has lived in the United States, which seems more likely than not to be the case, will tell you that the Government is "all graft." Only Venizelos does not steal, they go on—perhaps because he has a wealthy wife.

But that is going too far, of course. True, it is a rare foreign resident who knows the ropes who does not go down to the ship when his wife returns; for by handing out in the proper quarter a couple of seventy-five drachma notes, now the equivalent of a dollar each, he can get whole trunkfuls of new things, including a good supply of cigars, through the customs free of duty. Judging by the complaints we heard, every Greek-American born in Turkey is held up by officials

on the false charge of owing the Greek Government the hundred dollars for failure to serve in the army which is due from those born in Greece.

Yet it will take much more than that to convince me that the Government of republican Greece is nothing but graft. Besides, look at the Turkish training the Greeks have had. To continue the parallel of some pages back, the Greeks are in the position we should be if we had only recently recovered our government after it had been for centuries in the hands of Canada or Mexico, or, more analogous still, of Japan or China; and even a government suffers from centuries of alien abuse or dead storage.

Men are royalists or republicans according to their own selfish advantage, insist the outspoken inhabitants of the land where the difficult experiment of self-government was first tried. Once a government employee is out of a job, he will accept no other work, they say, but will starve and agitate until his side gets in again—if ever. So different from the ideal conditions in our own unselfish land. But whether or not she is to remain in the republican column, Greece has apparently learned her lesson, at least for the time being, and has forsworn any intention of further military efforts in Asia Minor, which should mean a constant improvement in conditions at home.

As everywhere, since governments began, the most vociferous complaint in Greece is that taxes are ubiquitous, iniquitous, and ridiculous. A ticket to an outdoor movie in Patras, which happens to lie before me, will illustrate. It cost me 10 drachmas, to wit: admission, 6; municipal tax, 2.42; government loan, 0.73; actors' fund, 0.30; and the remaining 0.55, unmentioned on the ticket, went as graft to the ticket-seller. Yet in the United States we kick, or would if we thought it would do us any good, at a ten-percent tax on the higher-

priced tickets only. The Greek workman even pays a tax on his bread, conclude those who wish to convince you that the present Government is worthy of little respect and to explain why the masses are inclined to examine the various models of Bolshevism.

"In America the Government only picks on rich men" (which was news to me), "but in Greece it is hardest on the poor man," insist the spokesmen of the great majority. The complaints at taxes that are too plainly visible in Greece show the wisdom in at least one matter of our type of taxation. We pay more in the end, especially if we count what goes to our "protected" industries; but most of our taxes being "invisible," there is less complaining.

Very ardent animosity has been aroused also by the methods several governments of republican Greece have used to borrow money of the citizens against their will. In monetary matters Greece trails along with Portugal, Bulgaria, and Rumania in not yet having stabilized its currency, with the result that the drachma, in theory equal to a pre-war franc, sold at little more than a cent during our summer in Greece. But that is not the worst of it. When it was hardest pressed by the refugee problem, the Government sold bonds by what might be called the Pangalos method—which I commend to the attention of our own financial Solons. No doubt the idea went back to Solon himself, and the decree of those days that men might pay their debts in coins only three fourths as heavy as the old ones but to be counted as of the same value. As a matter of fact it was Papadoupoulos, a predecessor of the Pangalos régime, who first worked out the trick, in modern times; for which he was quite properly executed, though officially his demise was on the charge that he had spent the resultant proceeds badly—as who doesn't nowadays? But before long the Pangalist crowd who executed him

followed in his financial footsteps, which is another of the many reasons why most Greeks are not in the least grieved to have Pangalos still languishing in jail.

A few years ago every one in Greece woke up one morning to find that all money in his possession had shrunk by one fourth during the night. True, it had been shrinking for some little time, but there was something especially exasperating about this particular shrinkage. That is, the Government had suddenly decreed that every one must either take his own scissors and operate upon his own dear bank-roll, like a surgeon on his own beloved child, or take it to a bank or government office for the operation. In any case, one fourth of every bill must be snipped off forthwith. Even if one did not thus visibly reduce one's own wealth, no one would henceforth accept a bank-note at more than three fourths its face-value, so it was less harrowing to get the ordeal over with and be done with it.

The tag-end of the bill went to the Government, which, to reimburse the loser, issued bonds—or was still to issue them a year later—paying six-percent interest, maybe, and to be paid off as to principal sometime, perhaps. As there are many much older Greek bonds that have never been paid, optimism is not the outstanding note in the matter. The only thing that saved the moneyed man or the needy corporation, such as the American tobacco “factories” in Thrace, from suffering as severely as the man in the street, was the fact that money on deposit in banks was not clipped; and to mention that the politically influential were in a position to deposit their cash before it was too late is to commit a tautology.

Though he is not unusually sentimental, for a man of his calling, or notoriously chauvinistic, the artist could often be caught fingering with affection some of Uncle Sam's crisp,



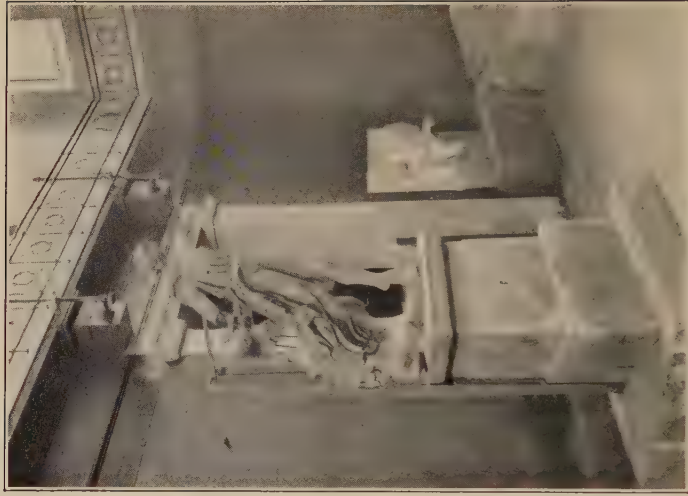
The little Byzantine church of Panagia Gargoepikos hides behind the huge but commonplace "Metropolitan" of Athens



The interiors of Greek churches, gaudy with ikons, are everywhere much alike



My companion did not give all the sculptors of ancient Greece hundred-percent marks in modeling



The Nike of Olympia has completely lost face

crackling bank-notes, which, after the manner of the inexperienced in foreign travel, he carried with him in Greece. Ye ancient gods of Hellas!—as he succinctly puts it—how beautiful they looked after fumbling at wads of decayed cabbage leaves masquerading as money! Picture yourself managing at last to cash a ten-dollar traveler's check and being handed a mass of paper similar to the rolls sold in our grocery stores—if you can imagine those much worse than second-hand—only to discover that one fourth of each filthy and probably ragged note had been snipped off. Or fancy the shock of finding a bank-note worth only a little more than a nickel. If the whole bitter truth must be told, the artist made matters several times worse because, being an artist and consequently unaccustomed to money in large quantities, he had never in his life used a pocket-book and refused to succumb to that weakness at this late date.

Given a wad of worn-out cabbage leaves to begin with, I leave it to your hardy imagination to recognize as coin of the realm the handful of paper pulp that was to be found in his most convenient trouser's pocket after a few hours of tramping in a Grecian summer. As to hard money, he refused absolutely to burden his artistic mind with the task of fathoming its value. When small sums were demanded, he merely held out a handful of change and let the vender or street-car conductor help himself. Since a whole pocketful of Greek coins could hardly be worth half a dollar, perhaps there was method in that one detail of his madness.

Personally I rather preferred the clipped money—as long as it had been clipped before it came into my possession. For the 100-drachma note most in use by persons of my caliber, having been reduced to 75 by the amputation process, was worth almost exactly a dollar that summer, and calculations were simplified accordingly. Unfortunately, ex-50-drachma

notes also were rampant, and if you think it is a simple matter to settle your obligations in scraps of paper worth 37½ drachmas, or any other monetary unit, you should go to Greece and be disillusioned. On the other hand, if you were hard up for change there was no objection to tearing a 5-drachma note in half.

On the once whitewashed walls of many a building in Grecian cities, even in bucolic towns no larger than Thebes, we found stamped the blood-red sickle-and-hammer insignia of the Bolsheviks, with the Greek words for "World Revolution" beneath it. Greek soldiers will not salute even a general; they ask, "Why should we?" In offices there is the same recalcitrant attitude, similar lack of discipline, respect, morale. . .

On the blistering afternoon of my second visit to the Macedonian capital, the mighty ramparts of castellated walls and towers, mellowed with age, which overlook Salonika enticed the artist to climb to them. Finally he found a breach in the ancient fortification and entered, with the idea of getting a paintable view of the city below. On my own first visit I had been welcomed almost with open arms by the conscripts who curse their luck there. But then, my facial contour suggests pristine innocence; besides, I had with me then a lady who spoke Greek. The artist, on the other hand, had been incarcerated in his own home town during the war, merely for pausing to sketch the munitions-congested terminal within sight of his studio window on the New Jersey shore. Why, then, should he have been surprised to find, as he rounded an angle of the Salonika wall, a sentry gesticulating emphatically with a bayonet so close to his chin that he changed his mind about the view?

But in his eagerness to sketch one of the old towers, he tried again, only to miss by a hair, when he attempted to

jump over the wall parapet down into a weed-choked moat, another soldier waiting to receive him on the point of another bayonet. Almost any one, even of an artistic temperament, can eventually be persuaded that he has not been invited, so the fortifications were never painted. But both soldiers were so enthusiastic and alert, in striking contrast to all Greek soldiers he had hitherto seen, that the artist mentioned his discomfiture to an American-Greek or vice versa whom we met shortly afterward.

"Oh, they took you for a Bolshy," explained that authority. "The Reds are swarming down here through Bulgaria, though God knows what good that lousy old fort would be in protecting us against them. You can't tell what them grafters in Athens will do next," he concluded, spitting in disgust.

Nor is it merely the missionaries from Russia who make the sleep of the present Greek Government a series of nightmares. On the whole, it rather prefers them to the Pangalists. No account of the problems of the Greece of to-day would be even sketchily complete without the story of Pangalos. King George—last royal decoration of modern Greece, you may recall—eventually got his walking papers, and in the welter of events that followed, General Pangalos, a former commander-in-chief of the Greek armies, got possession of the government by force. A few months later, you probably do not remember, he declared himself dictator and the constitution void. Apparently he concluded, however, that the mere dictator costume did not suit his particular style of beauty, and before long he had himself elected president, with visions, it is suspected, at least in the brain whorls of his ambitious spouse, of making himself king and founding a new dynasty. Even the good-natured Greeks will not endure everything, however, and in August of 1926, some

fourteen months after his sudden rise to power, a bloodless coup d'état upset Pangalos in his turn, since which time he has been awaiting trial in a famous old prison-fortress in the island of Crete.

Pangalos himself would give the Greek Government little worry but for the outstanding fact that he is married. Not since the days of bewitching Circe have the authorities of the rocky peninsula we know as Greece been faced with a more amazing personality than Mme. Pangalos, who in the heyday of her husband's absolute rule was known as "Empress Josephine." She is credited with having raised this ex-army captain, with apparently no other virtue than his audacity, to a power that for a time made her virtually the sovereign of Greece, and the most admired and best-hated woman in the land. As a girl, rich and ambitious, if not beautiful, she swore to marry whichever cadet headed the next graduating class at the Greek military academy and make a man of him. Young Pangalos was the preordained victim. She took him in hand and made his career.

Though Pangalos was a man devoid of fear—and, some say, of intelligence—his wife towered above him both mentally and physically, completely dominating her fiery spouse. She is credited with forcing him to issue, among many other ludicrous commands, his notorious anti-short-skirt decree, which caused such a furor among Grecian women of the cities. His own indiscretions of speech and action recall the interesting if true "Queen, you said a mouthful," episode in the history of our own metropolis. Or perhaps he was merely acknowledging the superiority of his powerful wife when he remarked at a gala function during his incumbency, to the diminutive wife of the then Japanese Minister, "Why, Madame, my wife's leg is bigger than your whole body!"

CHAPTER XIV

THE GREEK AT HOME

AMONG the many ways in which my education was sadly neglected is that I managed to dodge completely the study of Greek. I have never been partial to things long dead, be they fish, fowl, or human tongues. Indeed wisdom akin to that of Solomon must have come upon me unusually early in life, for even in my callow college days I suspected that wrestling with Greek verbs is a waste of time; and my summer in Greece amply confirmed that suspicion.

For no American will have the slightest trouble whatever, so far as the language is concerned, during his travels in Hellas. He has only to step into any coffee-house, approach any group of men anywhere, though it be in the most backwoods village at the top of the smallest and most remote island of the Ægean, to find an interpreter only too eager to serve him free of charge. In fact, it is almost an even bet that the first man he addresses anywhere on Greek soil (French-speaking Salonika and recently acquired Macedonia excepted) will manipulate some English—or, lest I offend our lingual cousins overseas, perhaps I should say American.

The first Greek I ever set eyes upon in his native land was a fisherman-looking fellow with a kerchief pirate fashion over his head, squatting on the wharf in "the" Piræus. He addressed me in my own tongue, saying he had once lived in the United States, and that only because "the Government" (whether of Greece or of our own land was not clear) "would

not let him," was he not there now. Fortunately for the American traveler, his prototypes are everywhere legion. Stop where we would, in the smallest or most remote town, we were quickly in touch with an interpreter, without raising a finger, much less thrusting a hand in our pockets. Some man who had once lived in the United States was sure to learn of our arrival in less time than it would have taken to look him up. He always dropped everything at once and hastened to assume the duties which our coming naturally laid upon him, moving at once into the limelight as the man of the hour.

For the time being this perhaps ne'er-do-well village character became a very prominent citizen, even his most outstanding fellow-townsmen gathering in increasing numbers about him and gazing open-mouthed while he rattled off something nearly enough like our native tongue to make his presence welcome. Nay, any man along the most unlikely mountain trail, any peasant in the old ballet-dancer or trouser-carryall costume, was so likely to remark casually, "Well, it's a pretty hot day, mister," or "Oh, I see you're paintin' a pitcher," that long before the summer was over we had lost all capability of surprise at any such incongruity.

So, as I say, why study Greek? The old stuff can be had in translations; and, anyway, the tongue spoken in Greece to-day would be almost incomprehensible to Socrates himself. Besides, hardly eight million people, including our bootblacks and restaurant keepers, speak it; and if you must fill your mind with strange words, try Chinese, for instance, which you have several thousand times more chances of being able to use. Let me not, however, be misunderstood as advocating the dropping of Greek from the curriculum in England, where ancient dead things are still held in honor; for there is comparatively little in common between the speech of these

self-appointed interpreters and that of either an Oxford don or a Whitechapel costermonger.

Many of the "Americans" we met were just home on a visit, after from ten to thirty years' absence, and were eagerly awaiting the hour when they would return to their adopted homeland. Some had come over for a last glimpse of the old folks in 1914—and were still visiting them. Others, coming later, had neglected to take into account our new immigration laws, before blithely stepping off our shores—and had reaped a lifetime of regret. One and all of this class regarded the impossibility of returning as the greatest misfortune of their lives. There was a mixture of the pathetic and the humorous in these encounters. Every man Jack of them was homesick for the United States, hungry for American news, always outspoken in his adoration of Uncle Sam, fervent in his praise of our every institution—except the new immigration laws—from baseball to "prohibition," proud as Punch of his ability to go back when he chose, if he had been foresighted, pathetic with heartrending pleas, if he were helplessly marooned, that we do something to help him return. Hardly a Greek who had once lived with us but was a more patriotic, or at least a more vociferous, American than either of us. In fact, some of the marooned were as completely American as we—much more so than many a passport-holder—men who had lived in the United States from the age of two to thirty, for instance, and who cursed the ill luck or the oversight that had sentenced them to Greece for the rest of their natural lives.

But whether they could nevermore go back, or had already bought their tickets, they were all our ardent partizans. Those about to sail wandered about like lost souls, asserting that "the time for sailing can't come too soon," attached them-

selves to us like leeches, explaining almost apologetically that they "only came over to see the old folks once more before they die" and usually adding with upraised hand, "Never again!" Greece is almost certainly the most pro-American nation in all Europe.

They were always pleasant and hospitable and eager to serve to the verge of officiousness, quite different from the Greeks, at least as I know them, in the United States. Can it be because these feel themselves snubbed when they meet us at home that so few Americans have any suspicion of the kindly good-fellowship, the half-Oriental hospitality, the hunger for human intercourse in the Greek character? Or is it merely that all these delightful qualities are laid aside, along with the strings of amber-colored beads they incessantly twiddle in their own land, as long as they are where the sorry occupation of money-grubbing is likely to yield results, and come forth again when they find themselves back in the rocky land where the pursuit of wealth is at best rather a vain and time-wasting occupation, far less promising of reasonable reward than is the practice of the simple amenities of life? I cannot recall ever having been handed a bunch of thyme, a fistful of roses, picked for my especial benefit, by a Greek in my own land. In Greece that was a most ordinary experience. Nearly all of them called us by our first names as soon as and as nearly as they understood them—usually "Harris" and "Georgie." Whether they knew no better, or just wanted to make us feel at home, or were merely living up to an old Greek custom I cannot tell you. But in any case it was a naïveté that was delightful. Certainly those myriad "Americans" made our stay in Greece many times more pleasant and considerably more worth while by their presence.

The haughty pride of those who had American passports was always amusing, sometimes almost offensive. We met



The Greek boot-black at home sits while his customer stands



Even in Greece the high cost of living provokes argument



Peasant weddings include twenty-four hours of what the celebrants fondly
mistake for dancing

so many of these surcharged fellow-citizens that it would clutter up the narrative to mention them all in their places. But come and meet a few of them, before we resume our meandering. There was that well-dressed man with a letter from the Mayor of Peabody, Massachusetts, beginning "Mr. — is one of our most substantial citizens . . ." That chef from Glen Cove, Long Island, who hoped we would come and sample his cooking upon our return; those two florists from the Bronx who left the impression that they would always feel hurt if we did not some day drop in and try some of the *krasí*—the Greek wine—they legally and openly made for their own use; or the man from Tennessee, wealthy, who spoke with both a Greek and a Southern accent, who had married a mountain girl and "had four kids," but whose wife had refused to come over with him "because she don't like foreigners." Not for an instant or the breath of a suspicion did he consider *himself* a foreigner, any more than do his passport-bearing fellows.

There were lean and sunburned Greeks who had wandered all over the United States; there were others who had remained narrowly in one spot and grown bank-accounts and the paunches of "success." On a single day we hobnobbed with two portly business men from Pittsburgh, a Greek lawyer from St. Louis, and a man who guarded as jealously as his passport a letter from one of the nickel-in-the-slot-restaurants of New York, where he, honest fellow, admitted he was only a dish-washer, just over on a vacation. The letter informed all whom it might concern, and a great many whom it did not in the least, that his job was still open to him; a kind of letter of credit and of recommendation and introduction combined.

There was the Greek who has the pool-room and a barber's shop and shoe-shine parlor (the only man in all Greece, by the way, who admitted any connection in the United States

with the shining of shoes) on the main street of Asbury Park. Or shake hands with that fat, jolly fellow from Megalopolis we met in Kalamata, who keeps a restaurant and a hat-cleaning place just opposite the Treasury Building in Washington, and prefers our capital as a home "because there are so many parades." He had wanted to go to the movies the night he landed in Greece, until he discovered that evening entertainments there do not begin until after ten.

"Us Americans," he confided, "are ready for bed by that time." To which his fellow-townsmen from Newark added a fervent "You betchuh!"

We were not even surprised when the ragged beggar wandering among the iron tables on the beach at New Phaleron changed his customary whine, at sight of us, to "Can you give us a nickel to buy bread, boys?"

"Going back? You can't get back into the good old U. S. A. with this," he mourned, holding up a crippled arm. "I was a fool ever to leave."

In general the "Americans" are more wide awake, have a more shaven look than their fellow-countrymen—their ex-fellow-countrymen, they would insist on putting it. An Englishwoman who has published the story of what she calls a three-legged tour of Greece, rages all through her pages at the "officious, vulgar," and so on, Greeks who have lived in America. But she is one of those who would slap at anything American, with or without provocation. We found them, on the contrary, much what we should like our friends to be. True, in talking with or through those from the United States, we were often struck with how completely materialistic are modern Greeks, who seem incapable of seeing beyond the physical advantages of one land over another. The art and the historical associations of their birthplace, to say noth-

ing of such present-day culture as exists there, appeared to be utterly unknown, or at least wholly unimportant, to them.

It was a proof, too, of the superiority of practice over theory to find how easily a man who had been in the United States could talk with us, even if his accent, his grammar, and his vocabulary were atrocious. Though he might not be able to read a word of English, he always managed to get across what he was trying to say, to catch whatever we said to him, while the much more educated man who had learned English at school, and could perhaps read and even write it well, often could not say his say intelligibly on the simplest subject. Now and then, too, we met a Greek speaking our tongue with an English accent and idiom, and were almost sure to find he had been with the British at Salonika during the war.

Yet it was amusing to see how the "American" Greek still clings to the time-honored customs, the old superstitions of his land, or at least how quickly he reacquires them upon his return, though many tried to cover up that fact in our presence, as if they had suddenly become ashamed or conscious of their innate Greekness. But then, even a good Moslem who now lives in the United States will seldom be caught saying his prayers in public. There are hundreds of those in New York alone; yet how many of them have you seen bowing down on a rug along the sidewalks of New York at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, and sunset—unless it is over a customer's shoes or in quest of a lost dime?

Every Greek returning to his native land with an American passport must pay the Greek Government a hundred dollars for not having served in the army—if he emigrated before 1912, as I understand it. Otherwise he owes not only the hundred-dollar fine but three months' military service,

in lieu of which he may pay another ten thousand drachmas. Surprised to find that an American citizen, armed with a passport quite like my own, could still owe tribute to a foreign land, I was assured that the United States and Greece had signed an agreement to that effect. If it is not true, then hundreds of naturalized Americans yearly are being imposed upon by the Greek authorities. Personally, looking back upon that summer in Greece, I should advocate a requirement of not five but of fifteen years' American residence before a man could be naturalized—though cases differ; perhaps ten years for those who arrive before the age of eighteen or so and fifteen for the others.

Until I reached Greece I labored under the delusion that Constantinople has the most bootblacks to the square yard, and the cheapest shines, of any place in the world. The Greek bootblack at home is ubiquitous and of necessity aggressive, in a polite Greek way; and he is contented with barely one tenth the fee he expects in New York. You get a pleasant attitude and an audible "thanks" for a drachma fee and a tip that is the merest fraction of a cent; and however small the gratuity, he is never impertinent or anxious to impress upon you his importance or good-as-you-ism. Lots of us realize that we are not superior to our bootblacks, but few of us like to have that fact thrust upon us every time we squander a Greek fortune for a shine that is seldom as good as those less-than-two-cent ones in Greece. But then, no doubt even bootblacks must do something to offset their inferiority complex.

At home the Greek bootblack carries his shop with him and has no overhead of rent, fuel, and light, with the added advantage of being able to move on short notice if a district proves poorly chosen. Nor is the difference in price so shameful as it sounds, for another reason; the stool under his arm

is not for your use. For in Greece, as elsewhere in the Near East, the bootblack lets his customer stand and does the sitting himself. The only exception to this which we noted was at Patras, where the central square is lined with high-chairs for customers. Officers' leggings or Cretan boots are evidently rated the same as low shoes, unless the client is generous, which he usually is not. And speaking of boots, there are shoemakers enough in Greece to shoe at least ten times the present population.

Though the two rarely go together in Greece, unless you call a bootblack in off the street—since the idea of saving time by doing two things at once is not Greek—the thought of a shine naturally reminds any American of the barber. The honest price for a hair-cut in most places is ten drachmas; a shave, half that. The barber may try to boost the price a few cents in honor of a stranger, and he will serve an old friend or a steady customer at something less than the average price—that is, at job rates. But at worst even an artist has no good excuse for going about Hellas with a boyish bob.

Thanks, no doubt, to the state of the "drack," as Greeks from America scornfully dub the native monetary unit, prices of many things are so low as to be almost pathetic. The exchange steadily grew worse—or, from our point of view, better—during most of our stay (once in a blue moon even artists and peripatetic scribblers have a bit of luck). Street-car fares hovered around two cents; good auto-buses could be patronized almost as cheaply. The breaking of a watch crystal was a minor tragedy, being the loss of only seven cents. A pair of trousers of good summer cloth could be had to order for two dollars; a tailor-made suit of excellent English material, on which for some strange reason there seems to be little or no duty, cost about twenty-five dollars.

Prices of food, labor, hotel rooms, transportation, and

local products always brought a glow of satisfaction. Government fees, boatmen, and such things as tooth-paste, which the Greek Government considers luxuries, were about the only sad experiences, financially speaking. A post-card could travel anywhere in Greece for fifty lepta; but let it venture abroad and its transportation costs two hundred and forty! One reason for low prices is that they are not in multiples of five, as in our own good land, and small as is the drachma it is still divisible. Bills of fare in even the best restaurants bore such items as "Roast mutton, Dr 5.40." "How much?" is still "Posa lepta?" though the lepta, or hundredth part of a drachma, has dropped out of Greek life.

Only those with the gift of the ostrich can travel comfortably in the interior of Greece. I have that gift, but the artist either was denied it or has lost it with advancing middle age. Possibly it was merely because I had ten years the jump on him that I could endure what he often waved aside with a sign of distress. Or perhaps it was only my superior training in many foreign lands. The Greek peasant not only lives on ripe olives, onions, and brown bread, but seems to enjoy them; and his women have very elementary notions of cooking. Yet in the cities and the larger towns the food is excellent—to my taste. My companion, unaccustomed to the continental European cuisine and seasoning verging on the Oriental, longed vociferously for what he considers good old American cooking.

Never before having wrestled with an American appetite in continental Europe, he was of course horrified at the custom of make-believe breakfasts. In Greece the *petit déjeuner* is *petit* indeed. It consists of a doll's tea-cup of what the Near East mistakes for coffee—coffee ground to powder, resembling chocolate, one third sediment and dregs—in which one dips a tiny crust. Nor was his astonishment one-sided.

To any one who had catered all his life to the average Greek, a meal sufficient to satisfy two Nordic appetites was beyond understanding. On the other side, it was a profound mystery to the artist how the Greek manages to live on the starvation rations that seem to be his usual lot. Perhaps frequent cups of Turkish coffee all day long kill an appetite much as coco leaves do.

We carried with us tea and American coffee respectively, but it was next to impossible to make a Greek knight of the kitchen understand that boiling water does not mean lukewarm water. Fuel has long been precious in denuded Greece. There is little milk in the country as a whole; half the artist's baggage on side trips consisted of a can of the powdered substitute. Even that ran out at times, as milk will. There was that dreadful Sunday morning in Sparta, for instance, when after hours of trying to explain his wants otherwise he was reduced to debasing his art to the cartoonist's level and drew the rear elevation of a cow with a comely milkmaid engaged in her traditional duty. But it must have been one of his off days, for only after some kindly soul had carried the masterpiece across the street to an "American" who could interpret it, was milk forthcoming.

In Greece a hotel is a place which furnishes lodgings; only in a few of the more pompous establishments in Athens and Salonika, establishments taboo to those dependent on the higher arts, does the proprietor deign also to feed his clients. Restaurants are worse than numerous, however; at least half the Greek nation seems to abhor dining at home, thanks perhaps to the rudimentary home cooking. Or should I say half the adult males of Greece? A woman in a restaurant is almost as rare as in a coffee-house, which means as unusual as in an Arabian mosque. Even the cooks and waiters are always men or boys.

Except in a few places in the larger cities the catalogo, or menu, is in Greek only; and French, the only other possibility, was just as useless to the artist; hence another reason for thankfulness at the plethora of "Americans." Waiters pay for each item of food with poker chips, and settle up with the kitchen when the meal-hour is over. So it is they and not the proprietors who lose if a customer escapes between the demi-tasse and the reckoning—though this seems never to happen. They are the losers, too, if the diner "forgets" something he has eaten, for in Greece it is the almost universal custom when making out the bill to let the client name the dishes he has had. Unless sheer starvation has crushed your sensibilities, it is well never to let curiosity, or even the inability to read the catalogo, tempt you to explore the kitchen of the average Greek restaurant. But the waiters are as courteous as the bootblacks; and, after all, why be exacting in a land where you can get a "good feed" for about twenty "dracks"?

Beef is rarely eaten in Greece. There is some veal in city restaurants, but country people will not serve the fatted calf even to relatives back from America. The feeling against it amounts to more than a superstition; perhaps it comes all the way from India, by way of the mutton-eating Mohammedan lands. Pork, too, seems to have been influenced by the Turks. In eight cases out of ten the only meat on the menu is that of the sheep—or of the goat—in various forms; the most popular, that stewed all day in the almost vain attempt to soften the steel-like muscles of what was evidently a champion crag-jumper, food which the present generation is perhaps compelled to endure for the sins of its forefathers.

Though luscious fruits (including mammoth cucumbers second only to wine in popularity as thirst-quenchers, as in

Turkey) there is a great scarcity of vegetables in all Greek towns, even in the country districts. Potatoes are not unknown—though, like woman's work, they are never done—but one is usually called upon to endure such miserable understudies as rice, egg-plant, or okra, especially okra, which the Greeks evidently like as much as I dislike it. The standard way out of all such difficulties in any land, for the experienced traveler, is to memorize the word for egg. In Greece it is *afgho* (of which *afgha*, by the way, is not the feminine but the plural), but apparently it only means old egg, never good egg. For there seem to be no fresh eggs in Greece; the hens are evidently trained to hold them until they are stale. Nor can any living Greek boil an egg. At the breakfast table they are raw and lukewarm; no amount of commanding and watchful waiting or even bribery will bring one to the proper state for picnic lunching. The artist several times unwisely took the word of Greek cooks, as ferried across to him through the gratuitous services of the nearest "American," and carried a few reputedly hard-boiled eggs in a coat pocket. It is astonishing how long it takes some highly intelligent persons to learn.

Yet the food itself would not have been so bad but for the near-necessity of washing it down with the turpentine wine of Greece. In the best Athens restaurants good wine may be had at something like ten cents an ice-cold half-bottle; seven to eight cents in a shop—unless you carry off the bottle itself. Nay, poor home-bound fellow-countryman, I am not wilfully teasing! In peasant villages the pure fermented nectar of the vineyards is available almost for the asking. But in all the vast gulf between these two extremes resin-preserved wine is used almost everywhere. The resinous wine so beloved of modern Greeks tastes exactly as I fancy furniture polish tastes; it reminded the artist so vividly of those

happy days when he used to lick the paint off his toys that I have actually seen tears start to his eyes at a single unwarned draft. To be sure, he is one of those benighted fellows who prefer water to wine even in its pristine state, so the wickedness of the wanton Greek custom was less apparent to him than to me.

It is easy to understand why, having for generations indulged in wine treated with pitch, most Greeks will not drink any other kind. But how on earth did the custom start? Was it from the pitch used in calking the barrels? A depraved taste can come upon a people gradually and unconsciously—as witness the Chinese preference for green fruits and nuts, because of centuries of having to outwit crop thieves. But the resinous wine of Greece is not so easily explained. The only reply we ever elicited was that without pitch “it won’t taste like wine and won’t keep long.”

We could never get a Greek to believe, even in the face of the experience of the rest of Europe, that wine not ruined with resin could endure. Every one of them insisted that Greek grape juice is different! Historians tell us that the ancient Greeks often poured three times as much water as wine into their cups, but so far as my delving into Æsop goes, they were not addicted to pitched wine. To them a drunken man was a disgusting object, and to that extent the Greeks of to-day are still on a par with their famous ancestors—or predecessors. We saw only one man in all Greece under the influence, in the popular sense of the word, of his liquor, and he had lived for nearly twenty years in the United States.

There are what reasonable Americans would call good hotels in Athens and its seaside suburb of Phaleron, in Salonika, Patras, and Candia in Crete, though in the last two named cities the national custom of sending clients out to restaurants is in vogue. Nowhere else, unless some slight ex-

ception has escaped me, can much be said in praise of the accommodations for transients, except the price—from twenty to thirty drachmas a night. A room without at least two beds is a rarity; no doubt the company-loving Greeks prefer that arrangement, and seldom were we separated even during our sleeping hours.

Nearly all hotels in Greece resemble those on our frontiers, and in a certain department of life the horrors of Greek living cannot be exaggerated. In the provinces sponge-baths in pitcher-filled bowls are the only form of general ablution possible between rare swims; another good reason for now and then getting back to Athens. Even in the capital, baths could of course be had only at a price; and the experienced traveler in continental Europe will not neglect to carry his own soap.

We spent—or, as the artist more correctly puts it—we squandered a night or two in each of about a score of Greek hotels. But looking back upon them, the dozen or more nights without lodging, for reasons presently to be vouchsafed, were probably more pleasant; while of the American home we were privileged to inhabit in the island of Syra the only harsh thing that can be said is that sojourns in Elysian Fields make poor training for enjoying life in Hades.

At Salonika, in what travelers have called the best hotel in the Balkans, a room in every way what it should be, though on the noisy and sunny land side of the house, and away from the blue bay with its breeze and its views of Mount Olympus, was priced at only 70 drachmas a day. Ah, yes, but . . . the French imitation of a breakfast at 20 drachmas, or twice what a similar one would have cost in a restaurant down the street, was "obligatoire"; which means that you paid for it whether you ate it or not. Ten percent for service was added to the bill, as almost everywhere in Greece,

and more was expected; and the Government collects a fifteen-percent luxury tax—a hotel as comfortable and clean as the ordinary one at home being no doubt a luxury in Greek eyes. Thus the mere 70 “dracks” which in your haste to taste comfort again you are likely to visualize as the morning’s bill, becomes 90, plus twenty-five percent, equals 112 drachmas, which after all are not mere cents—total \$1.45, and “whatever Monsieur wishes to give” to the concierge by day and the concierge by night, the admiral-garbed manager himself, and a host of imaginary or at least invisible servants, all of whom are alleged not to share in the obligatory ten percent for service. Still, you would be only too glad to get such a room in such a hotel, even without a European breakfast thrown in, for twice that in any American city.

Patras had still another distressing trick in that fifty percent is added to the hotel bills of “strangers.” Obviously, however, in a town where competition for guests is keen, except on the two or three steamer days a month, experience soon teaches even the foreigner how to prove that he is no stranger. He has merely to start to walk out again after asking the price of rooms, to be instantly promoted to the status of old resident. But most travelers, notably Americans, lack either the good sense or the audacity to ask in advance about all these charges, so perhaps it serves them right that they find them on their bill when it is forever too late. And good or poor, dirt cheap or verging on the expensive, there is not a public lodging-place in Greece where you can escape filling out a long form for the information of the police; still another argument in favor of the no-lodgings, into the secret of which I shall in due time induct you.

Cafés, which even the impecunious somehow find means to patronize and thereby gain a seat wherein to idle away the hours, are everywhere in Greece, along the busiest streets

of Athens and Salonika, in the most remote little mountain-island village. Except in the blazing middle of the day—and, thanks to some huge old tree or other form of shade, often even then—the great majority of coffee-house clients sit outdoors. In fact, the same may be said of restaurants; and what more pleasant than to lounge out in the middle of an unpaved street, with the full moon smiling down upon you, and dine in style? In Greece you look for a man not in his office but at the near-by café, where you will find virtually all the men, whatever the hour.

As to the poor man, one soon discovers that Greek coffee-houses do much business on credit, especially in the smaller town and villages. There the landlord may be seen chalking up on a blackboard names and the price of drinks much more often than he receives cash, the indebtedness of some clients running into five figures. Cafés are particularly useful as resting-places for famished foreigners waiting for dinner. For in Greece the dining-hour begins about nine; movies and outdoor revues in garments to suit the climate, with fortunately situated householders gazing down upon them from their windows, after ten—not that it was easy to drag to such forms of recreation a man whose youthful art-school duties included the passing upon applicants for positions as models.

Sitting down being the national pastime, it is natural that there should be many chairs in Greece; not only in the coffee-houses but wherever there is shade near them; chairs not only to sit down in but for one's feet, and a third chair for the coffee-tray, in many of the less haughty districts. All of them are those rush-bottomed chairs many Americans rave over. New York pays from four to six dollars to get a bottom put in such a chair; in Greece the whole chair does not cost a dollar.

CHAPTER XV

APPRAISING THE MODERN HELLENES

THOUGH they are incorrigible starers and belong distinctly to the excitable and shrieking branch of mankind, I cannot see a single way in which the Greeks of to-day are not more likable than the Turks. Certainly it is a joy to be in Greece after a sojourn in Turkey; it is like returning home after imprisonment by the enemy. To be sure, the Greeks were on our side in the World War, and came out of it with a bigger country, while Turkey was much shrunk by her basting. But Greeks of all classes are most friendly, especially to English and Americans, and have a totally different attitude toward visitors than the officious, rule-of-thumb, naturally malicious subjects of Kemal.

Nor did we by any means find the Greeks less honest than the Turks. Why does one so often hear that Moslems are much better examples of morality than Christians in the Near East? Did the statement start with some would-be humorist, and carry on, as false information will? Or is it due to the same psychology as the alleged fact that every American has a pet Jew? Proves him broad-minded, is evidence that his dislike of Jews or Turks as a race is not mere prejudice? Perhaps it is only an old misjudgment, of unknown origin, like so many other false impressions; possibly merely a reaction from the fanatical days of the Crusades.

We had been warned that the Greeks are so tricky that they would cheat the monkey of an organ-grinder out of its

hard-earned penny. So for a time we watched them as one would an escaped convict. Gradually our attitude changed completely. Now and then a boatman tried to charge us a quarter instead of the legal fare of half that amount. One Greek innkeeper padded his bill in our honor—but he had been in America. What Greeks who have lived in the United States could easily do to travelers who do not speak their native tongue is, in the slang of the day, nobody's business. Yet, so far as our experience goes, they never take dishonest advantage of their splendid opportunities.

However, even his best friends admit that sometimes the Greek is not strictly honest and straightforward. A man who left Greece at the age of fourteen, now a florist in the Bronx, back on his first visit at the age of thirty-six, said that his own cousin tried to cheat him; and he added that there were more fights in his native village than in all New York City. Personally, I do not remember seeing a single blow struck, to say nothing of the flashing of knives or gunpowder; and a five-dollar bill would cover all the cheating of which we were the conscious victims. We were warned, especially by Greeks who had returned from America, to beware light-fingered gentry; yet in spite of the habit of leaving our belongings in the hands of complete strangers on the least provocation, the only horrible things perpetrated upon me by my fellow-man in Greece were that three cigars were abstracted from the knapsack I left in the keeping of a village station-master and a film ruined by some one—probably a prying child—in a hotel office. I have already mentioned how diners in Greek restaurants or clients of cafés are asked to give their own version of what they have consumed; yet I know of only one place in the United States where that Utopian custom is in vogue. Our own opinion is that the Greeks are not clever, unsympathetic crooks but

rather simple and well-meaning, as honest as any race in their condition would be, and almost universally courteous and kind-hearted.

Still, far be it from either of us to wish to leave the impression that the noisy, kind-hearted Greeks of to-day are an ideal people. They lived with and under the Turks too long to have much precision, initiative, energy, or honesty in government. No doubt it is due to long Turkish domination that they have no system, in banks, government offices, even on their ships, sometimes seem lacking even in plain common sense. Walk into a Greek bank with a letter of credit issued by an institution of which it is officially the correspondent, show your passport as added proof, and still your plea for funds will rarely be listened to unless you can also produce two reputable witnesses who have known you for some time—a simple little matter in a strange country which you have never before honored with your presence, and conclude forthwith you never will again.

Somehow the Greeks do not give one the same impression of manliness and strength as the Turks, to say nothing of the truer Moslems beyond. While the picked troops have an enviable reputation, the average Greek recruit does not look as if he could do much damage to a Turkish soldier. Nor is there any question but that the Hellenes in their native land are rather indolent. Clerks get to the office at nine, maybe; take an hour or so to warm up their mental engines, and at about eleven they begin to think of leaving until four. And in the afternoon, after a nap, they have not much life left for anything but café recreation. "Avrio," which is Greek for "mañana," is quite as all-embracing as its Spanish equivalent. There is a never-do-to-day-what-you-can-put-off-until-to-morrow attitude which is delightful when it is not exasperating. The average Greek at home seems to do everything

as slowly as possible, as if in the hope of making the job on hand last out his time on earth. Greeks from America, in comparison with their untraveled fellows, constantly suggest an engine in danger of overrunning its track.

To be sure, the modern inhabitant of Hellas gets a good deal of exercise in talking, even if it is only from the waist up. The desire for privacy or silence is a weakness he simply cannot understand. Ceaseless, vociferous conversation is one of his leading traits—of the men even more than of the women, so far as we could hear—and to judge from those who speak English, his endless chatter and heated discussions about nothing sum up exactly to zero. Except in the way of practical information on the most everyday subjects, I can hardly remember ever having heard a remark worth hearing.

Yet when they come to the United States, these same coffee-house loafers, who at home live meagerly on the languid labors of their few active hours or on the rents from lands or houses left them, and who will not risk anything in business there, can toil many hours a day, and risk their money, too, if that is necessary to get on. At home there is the natural fear of never getting it back, a complex left by centuries of Turkish rule. After all, is it not mainly a question of the likelihood of reward, and something to do? You cannot be energetic without a job, nor be always cultivating a scrap of land that needs only a few weeks' work on it a year.

Greeks back from the United States were more caustic than we over the lack of system, the graft of petty and perhaps higher officials, the national custom of closing everything in the middle of the day. Scores of them left it to us whether or not they could ever have succeeded as they had in America if they shut up their shops for three or four hours each day. The answer of course is that to be sure they

could, if people in America also did all their shopping only in the morning and the late afternoon hours.

I was surprised to find how few Greeks seem to know anything of the history of even their own home town. It has been said that they are very proud of "their" great past, that every citizen of modern Greece has a superiority complex more or less subconsciously derived from the greatness of his ancient predecessors. Yet we saw little evidence of this; rather a tendency to be apologetic about the backwardness of his poor but beloved country. If he is passionately fond of dwelling on the accomplishments of his forebears, it must be a secret vice. On the other hand, he seems to have retained the unquestioning hospitality toward strangers which is reputed to have been one of the most charming virtues of the ancient Hellenes.

But here we are again praising instead of damning him! That's the trouble with likable people; one finds it difficult to dwell upon their faults. Let's try again. No proposition was ever put up to a modern Greek, be it only the catching of a train a mile away an hour later, that he did not find it "impossible"—unless he had lived in the United States. "They have no kick, no get-up-and-go," complain those who have lived with us, of those who have never left home. Only by dint of long and vociferous argument can they be talked into doing anything outside the regular daily routine. They suggest a worn-out society, rather than an up and coming one, producing novelties, conceiving and carrying out new ideas.

Do races go to seed for the same reason that religions do—get hidebound with rites and formalities and conventions and taboos until they can no longer carry the weight they once did, become so top-heavy they topple over? A kind of national hardening of the arteries; dead before they know

they are dead, just as happens to all of us eventually. Certainly, with all their virtues, the modern Greeks suggest a run-down race. How can this people, now apparently devoid of any but the most materialistic thoughts, too lazy to think, have produced the civilization of ancient Greece? The answer of course is that this is not the same people—nor, to any great extent, the same country.

The Greeks have no memory, asserts one of their best friends, herself married to one of them, and resident by choice in Hellas. She asserts that although she has lived there only a decade, she knows every street in Athens, while her Athens-born secretary hardly knows the *Odos Stadiou*, the principal thoroughfare. When duty takes her to *Salonika*, she has to wire her secretary almost daily not to forget this or that, though it is all written down on the day's calendar. Often the telegram reads simply, "Be sure to look at the calendar." The Greeks reply, "Why, of course you people from the cold, peppery North can remember." What virtue in weather! In most other ordinary mental qualities the Greek seems to be normal; he is good at foreign languages, for instance. But that, retort his defamers, is merely a means of showing off. In short, the Greeks are half Orientals in many ways—in their indifference to time, their treatment of women, their love of sitting in the shade; Western in other matters, the meeting-place of East and West.

There are really only two reasons for the frequent urge to commit murder in Greece. One is the difficulty of getting a plain "yes" or "no." That classical ditty of yesteryear concerning the affirmative absence of bananas is not in the least humorous there. As in Japan and China, such is the habitual mode of expression. It is hard enough to remember that "nay" means "yes." But so does a shake of the head. Nod-

ding the head—or, rather, thrusting the features upward in an exaggerated suggestion of an evil smell—is the habitual form of negation.

An Englishman who had studied modern Greek assiduously for a year, preparatory to a residence in Athens, so runs a certain sad story, first tried out his new accomplishment by asking three men of Patras whether the train he had hoped to take to the capital was already gone. The first man made an ugly grimace. The Englishman put him down as a half-witted blighter. The second clicked his tongue on his teeth, the third whistled emphatically—both equivalent to “not by a dam site,” if only the Englishman had known it. But his tutor had been careless; and convinced that after all his efforts he could not make himself understood, the poor fellow gave it up and went to a hotel; and after the train had come and gone, the tale ends, he took the next steamer back to England.

Believe it or not, Greeks who have lived for twenty years in America still make monkey faces more often than verbally affirming or denying, after a few days back in their native land. Even Americans living in Greece do so, for like all bad habits this one is very catching. Returning Greeks quickly re-adopt, too, the other custom which makes homicide justifiable. All through Turkey I refrained from throwing a brick, on the understanding that the habit of constantly clicking beads, as well as the facial grimaces for “yes” or “no,” would disappear when I entered Greece. For I considered that Europe—though most Greeks apparently do not. Never was a man more grievously disappointed. If anything, both the making of faces and the incessant rattling of manly beads was worse there than along the Bosphorus.

It was once a Moslem custom to tell on a rosary the twenty-nine attributes of Allah. But to-day the string of



Centuries of water-seekers have worn deep grooves in the stone curbing of many a Grecian well



Greek churches contain many such testimonials that Christian martyrs took their martyrdom calmly



By August the currant-grapes of Greece are ready for
harvesting



Many a Greek peasant might almost be mistaken for a
ballet-dancer

amber or imitation or wooden or leather or glass or what-not beads carried by nearly all men, in Greece as well as in Turkey and the other Moslem lands beyond, has no religious significance whatever. They are merely nervous beads, time-killers, occupation for idle hands, with no other reason to exist than the love of fidgeting during leisure hours. Beads everywhere, men only, priests less often than laymen; and it is not merely the sedentary sissies of the cities who carry them, either. Policemen, dock-wallopers, horny-handed peasants all have the habit. They rattle them in trains, they rattle them in tramways, they rattle them everywhere, at all times; they so love noise that if silence threatens to settle down for a moment they rattle their beads harder than ever. Yet if you even threaten to kill, you are considered queer and impolite.

If by an unlucky chance some poor fellow has no beads to rattle, he will diddle with a watch-chain, a snapping cigarette holder, anything that he can swing round and round before your weary eyes and rattle in your exasperated ears. No doubt it is for the same reason that an Englishman carries a cane and an American keeps his hands in his pockets; but these occupations for idle hands are harmless in comparison. The only thing in our own land approaching bead-slinging in provoking the longing to kill is the fellow who persistently jingles the change or the keys in his pockets. Did Achilles and Hercules sling beads? No wonder you seldom see a Greek woman wearing beads, and never carrying them; she would be ashamed to be numbered in such loafing company.

In all Greece and its islands I never saw a café or house-door loafer reading, except occasionally a rag of newspaper; so perhaps beads are unavoidable. At any rate, it has been estimated by an expert statistician-psychologist whom I did not hire to investigate the matter for me that if all the ass-

power Greek men expend on the rattling of beads were laid end to end it would not only build good roads for all Greece but would keep the women from carrying water and fire-wood and toiling in the fields, with enough left over to read a book now and then. And the purer psychologist I did not engage a little later found that the will-power expended by foreigners in Greece to keep from snatching the beads out of a man's hand and grinding them under a heel, if nothing worse, would be sufficient to prevent him from ever going to Greece at all.

Modern Hellas is still infested with priests and monks, though the Government has recently forbidden young men to retire to monasteries, except those on Mount Athos, and has confiscated most monasterial property. Yet there is not so much religion, in the sense in which most Americans use the word, as in many a less priest-ridden country. Churches glittering with spires and onion-shaped domes are everywhere, though they are not so noisily conspicuous as in Russia. The interiors are all much alike—walls completely covered with gaudy ikons and gleaming paraphernalia (flat surfaces only, no statues or third dimensions allowed, so that in this matter also the Greeks stand about midway between the picture-abhorring Moslems and Christians of more Western faith).

The ikons and pictures in Greek churches are to my taste extremely bad art, though I am quite ready to acknowledge that I am no fit critic. Even my companion, however, admitted that anything less artistic than most of the revered paintings in the average Greek church or monastery would be hard to find. Yet sometimes their naïve innocence of art makes them interesting and even fascinating. In a few famous establishments some of the oldest pictures are good in a quaint way; most of them are mere daubs; and some are so highly amusing—the calm afternoon-tea manner, for

instance, in which not only the martyr himself but his on-looking family and friends and disciples take his martyrdom—that the beholder with an overgrown sense of the ludicrous contains himself with difficulty. What makes the billboard aspect of Greek church interiors even worse than the lack of art is the fact that there is more kissing in the Greek religion than in a movie; hence all the more important ikons and pictures of saints and other alleged benefactors must be reinforced in silver.

“Are the Greeks religious?” an unusually curious tourist once asked a Greek of high station.

“I do not understand you,” replied the official.

“I mean, do they go much to church?”

“Oh, yes, indeed!” cried the Greek. Which is symbolical of religious affairs in present-day Greece. In the long centuries since its founding, the Greek Orthodox religion has become as set as cement. Men no longer think on religious subjects, to all appearances; not even the priests, unless it be on some totally unimportant detail of ritual. There are few “free thinkers” in Greece, probably because the vast majority of Greeks do not think at all, at least not on religious matters. They seem even more content than the Roman Catholics to let their priests do their religion for them.

On the other hand, the Greek Orthodox Church is not so militant as the Roman Catholic. The patriarch is merely chairman of the synod, twelve archbishops who must elect to his office one of the three of their number designated by the people; and he must resign at a vote of censure by the people. Hence there is no infallible pope. People are not compelled to come to church, or to give toward its support. True, some priests have a way of wringing contributions from the pious well-to-do. But on the whole they are easy-going even in this matter.

It is interesting to find what has grown up in the Catholic Church since the schism between Rome and Byzantium, by noting what the Greek Church does not have which the Catholic does. The most casual observer cannot but discover that the Greeks are still polytheists. They have not only fully as many saints as the Romanists but many superstitions concerning spirits that inhabit caverns, forests, cliffs, rocks, mountain peaks. Some of their rites are directly descended from those in vogue when Zeus reigned on Mount Olympus. They seem to have promoted to sainthood after the break a whole set of worthies whom the Catholics have not seen fit to honor—though, to be sure, many unknown to Byzantium have been advanced by Rome since the separation. The Greeks are real baptists; they souse sinful babies three times, the last time completely under—want no Achilles heel of original sin left. There seems to be no use now, whatever may have been in the past, for pulpits in Greek churches. Directly admonishing the people in public, if it was ever the custom, appears to have died out; so that what may once have been the pulpit has shrunk to a useless appendix.

There is a kind of confession, at Easter, to which most Greeks consider it more or less their duty or necessary to their future salvation to come. The Greek confessional is so arranged that confessor and penitent must sit at opposite sides of a table, each on a bench into which he must slide in a sitting position, and from which neither can rise as long as the door is closed. "There used to be too much monkey business," an "American" explained. Penances are often more severe than in the Catholic confessional, says a Greek-American who is married to an American Catholic. "The priest may cut off your favorite food for weeks." Yet he is less likely than his Catholic confrère to make you pay for your

sins in cash. Priests go through the streets once a year throwing "holy water" and blessing all houses along the way, and they are never refused something at that time. But their rewards seem to be due more to the good nature inherent in the Greek character than to any real fear that they may be able to deny the layman the pleasures of heaven.

To outward appearances Greek priests and monks are rather despised by all but the lower classes, and are not held in very great honor even by them. Certainly few of them inspire respect. The majority are obviously indolent, so little addicted to soap that one usually suspects their long hair, beards, and robes of covering a multitude of iniquities; and most of them are ignorant even of church archæology and history, and entirely uninterested in learning anything more than the ritual they mumble so many times a day. Even among pious laymen, monks have the reputation of being rascals, in spite of their designation of "good old men." Modern life has rather outgrown them, one would say. The decree forbidding monasteries to recruit more inmates, confiscating monasterial property, and planning other reforms (such as allowing bishops to marry) would have been carried out long ago, it is said, if Turkey had not held the country. While that was the case, the Greeks were afraid that if they ordered the monasteries closed, their holdings would be considered government property and confiscated by the Turks.

Until recently, bishops and those above them were usually chosen from among the monks, because a bishop must be a celibate. A priest who had been married before taking orders might keep his wife, and a widower priest might aspire to higher office. But the ambitious took care not to hamper their careers with a legal spouse, since a married priest could not become a bishop, prior, patriarch, or anything else of

importance and enviable emoluments. But alas! where in this unfair world does not the married man and the father get the thorny end of the stick?

The "papa," or barber-aborring Greek priest, in his long robe and stovepipe head-dress, so ill-fitted to the climate of Greece, no more thinks of taking off a single garment of his insufferable wardrobe, at least at any time or in any place where the public might hear of it, than of removing the jungle that covers his bullet head and never-shaven face. Beneath their air-proof, arctic black robes, reaching from bewhiskered chin to shoes worthy a doughboy engaged in a long punitive expedition, they seem to wear not only under-clothing of stuff as heavy as a winter bath-robe but the whole civilian attire. It seems to be immodest to wear lighter materials even in summer; so on the whole they earn their meager living after all.

Priests and monks are variously gifted. Some have beards only a few inches long; others have them nearly to their knees, beards which they have to tie up when they go to work in the fields, as do now and then the lower orders of both categories. Similar discrepancy in hair. Some have a little knot of it like a hazelnut; others resemble the fuzzy-wuzzies of the Sudan. Well-regulated papas do up their hair with hair-pins. The one boon granted them is that they may air their ears. Ah well, there is at least the advantage that billiard-ball heads look better covered. But with backwoods country women almost the only long-haired Greeks left outside the church, priests and monks look even more incongruous than in former days. Nor are beards ever seen on laymen, either because eschewing of the razor would be presumptive of them or because no layman wishes to be mistaken for and held in as little honor as a priest.

Yet progress does progress, even in Greek religious mat-

ters! A few priests have obviously thinned out their hirsute horrors. On a boat from Crete I saw one with bobbed hair! That is, he had dared to cut his hair off straight across the neck. He was stared at more incessantly and universally than were the first bobbed women in our own land, and was evidently suffering as keenly from self-consciousness. He had even had the reckless courage in some moment of revolt to trim his beard into little more than a Vandyke; and his robe looked a little thin, though by no means as thin as the garments you and I insist upon from June to September. A pioneer, perhaps, due at some still distant date to lead his robed brethren out of their earthly purgatory. But it was obvious that the fundamentalists who make up ninety-nine and some percent of the Greek priesthood and monkhood, perhaps even of the Greek people, numbered him among the hopelessly damned.

Now and then a spotlessly clean, snow-white-haired and bearded old man, usually high up in the hierarchy, gains some dignity from these accoutrements. But they are too far now from modern dress and customs even to inspire respect; an anachronism, just as is the medieval custom of living the isolated, prayerful, perhaps debauched, certainly debauching life of the monasteries, and both were visibly dying out even without the forcible assistance of the Government. Yet the law still protects these post-dated wearers of the black robe. One may go to jail for a long time for pulling the whiskers of a priest or a monk; "you can't nanny-goat them," as an "American" put it, however great the temptation. A New York barber we met at home on a vacation told us of a case in which two young men were sentenced to thirteen years' imprisonment for shaving a priest by force.

Another sign of the times is the fact that the Metropolitan of Salonika, whom you met in an earlier chapter, has prom-

ised to send his fat, bearded fellows to the new two-hundred-thousand-dollar Y. M. C. A. building, for exercise. And the Greek sub-director, who developed an American disgust for certain weaknesses of his people during some years of "Y" work at Springfield, Massachusetts, and Chicago, says he will put them in short running pants and treat them quite like any other flabby adults. But even he admits that he cannot check their beards before pushing them into the swimming-pool.

CHAPTER XVI

SAILING THE ÆGEAN

FORTUNATELY for the summer traveler in Greece, a good deal of his time must be spent cruising in the Ægean. For that is his only respite, except the mountains he may climb, from a heat that is incessantly all but unendurable. When Athens or any other part of the mainland can simply be borne no longer, one can always escape to the islands. Taxis, buses, street cars connect the capital with the Piræus, if the excellent electric trains on almost subway schedule are just too dreadfully modern for a soul steeped in the romance of so ancient a land. Even I would hardly advise walking, at least in summer, if only because of the irritation latent in a mixture of much perspiration and a generous supply of cement-like dust. Time was when this now twenty-minute journey between Athens and its port was a long half-day's trip by "carriage," among files of goods-laden camels and around a great morass, over Turkish caricatures of roads.

The densely packed little harbor of Piræus is surrounded by a town which few of us would be proud to call home. Like a small inland lake, the Bay of Piræus is more suitable to canoeists than to international traffic. Sometimes flocks of sheep or goats completely fill the always crowded streets, constipating the sluggish traffic entirely; they fill the deck of many an inter-island steamer until passengers cannot possibly cross it. Here, where ancient galleys were built, is

the busiest—aye, and the hottest—port in the country. An extraordinary jam of shipping, in feverish, colorful activity. No wonder hours are wasted untangling anchor chains—not that the mere loss of time ever seems to be a serious matter to the Greeks, afloat or ashore, for all their constant shrieking and perpetual excitement.

Ships pack the tiny harbor like a standing-room-only audience, yet never by any chance does one of them touch the cobble-paved, goods-and-human-thronged quay. For they must be far enough out to enable the swarming boatmen to exact tribute from every arriving or departing passenger. The great majority of them are little steamers of, say, five hundred tons burden, flying the Greek flag. Now and then the ocean liners, Greek or foreign, that huddle together in the one part of the harbor deep enough for them, may number as many as half a dozen, though never for long. Those merely halting here on their way to somewhere else are worth boarding, if only to note how careful are the Turks on board not to go ashore (as are Greek passengers in Constantinople), and to catch such purisms of tourism as:

“Come on and get off and let’s go see the Acropolis.”

“Oh, I don’t know; are there any steps to it?”

“Say, how far is the Acropolis from the Parthenon?”

“Where does this Polly Penesus live anyway; and is she worth going to see?”

If our land journeys were labyrinthine, what shall I say of our route among what a bright sophomore once called the “Aisles of Grease”? You might think historic Hellas had been blown up in some prehistoric explosion, so far and wide are pieces of it scattered all over the blue Ægean, like the disarticulated skeleton of some paleolithic monster.

We visited—except that I went alone to Crete—all the larger and most of the small and unimportant sea-girt mountain-tops rising from the incredibly blue waters of that eastern arm of the Mediterranean. I have no idea how many times we passed, usually by night, the marble columns of Sunium's temple on Cape Colonna—clearly seen in so cloudless a land even when there is no moon.

But I will spare the reader the hectic running back and forth for tickets and steamers, provided he will promise to remember, should he ever find himself in our predicament, one very important fact. Namely, that there is never a steamer that evening to wherever he wishes to go, unless it happens that the particular line whose office he enters for information has one. Having been vociferously assured that there is no ship to-day to the destination he has in mind, let him step into the next agency and he will almost surely find one.

Greece has a million tons of merchant marine, much of it plying between Piræus and the islands of the Ægean; and in nearly every case one must come back to the central hub of this wheel, Piræus, for a new start, arriving in the morning and leaving again that evening. The intervening day may be spent in Athens; otherwise there is little to be done with it except to wait, for almost every sailing is at sunset. Thus you can save hotel bills, if you are content to go all day without a wash and an afternoon nap. About the only exception to this return to Piræus is that you can sometimes get a steamer to other islands from Syra (Greek, Syros). In the days when all Greece belonged to the sultans, Syra was the cross-roads of the eastern Mediterranean, where most travelers transhipped. A few steamers, too, are on connected runs among one or another of several separate

strings of minor islands; but most of them merely go from the Piræus to somewhere else and back again.

But for those frequent cool nights on shipboard, we should surely have melted away entirely before the summer was over. As it was, we left pounds as well as dollars behind us. They were almost all deck-chair trips. We started out in first class, but the discerning traveler soon learns the wisdom of buying third-class tickets. Not that the saving is so great, even if third costs only about one fourth as much as first; though perhaps in total deck travel reduced our expenses considerably. But why pay for accommodations you cannot use? It is next to impossible for human beings of Northern extraction to sleep in the state-rooms of an inter-island steamer during the summer months.

There are mosquitoes in the state-rooms, none on deck. The bunks are always too short and usually too narrow—to say nothing of stone-hard—either because Americans average greater length and beam than Greeks or because the builders saved themselves a few lepta by skimping on materials. Sometimes the cabins are clean, and some of them are equipped with electric fans. But what can a poor little artificial breeze do against the summer heat of Greece? In temperature the cabins are on a par with the engine-room. We found it impossible not only to sleep but even to change our clothes in them.

One night, when we had taken a cabin passage again just to make sure it was not merely our Scotch blood that kept us on deck, I grimly resolved to make use of my state-room berth or die in the attempt. I stripped entirely and took the bunk beside the port-hole. Two Greeks, one of them a policeman in heavy woollen uniform, rolled, fully dressed, into two of the other bunks, and pulled blankets over them. Then they called a steward to close the port-hole. Several times he at-

tempted to obey their orders; each time I sent him scurrying. But they won in the end. For the sweat ran down my naked ribs until the tickling became unbearable. I slipped into some clothes and escaped to the open deck for the rest of my journey among the Isles of Greece.

The Ægean steamers are all very much alike, their commanders always easy-going. I cannot conceive of a Greek captain with moral courage enough to order any one with a deck ticket out of first-class deck space, though he might whisper to a steward to do so. But the steward, too, is Greek. Hence third-class passengers, unless they are actually ragged or completely lacking in audacity, crowd even upon the bridge, where in most cases there is a kind of rear veranda with benches, an alcove with chairs, supposedly reserved for first-class passengers, because there is seldom room for them to walk or even to sit among the plebeian passengers recumbent on the main deck itself.

Even to stretch out on a park bench on the hurricane deck, if any, or on a wooden life-raft unoccupied by the mob, was a great improvement over cabin travel. Usually we slept in deck chairs, in spite of rules to the contrary. As if to make up for that lack of moral courage which renders it impossible for the average Greek to enforce a rule, Greek deck chairs are so built that by pulling out a wooden rod at one end a steward could roll up and carry off for the night the all too narrow canvas, leaving only the bare framework. But after a single lesson I always managed to get into a deck chair before they were all deprived of their canvases, and never did a man have the courage to order me out.

It was not bad sleeping, with one's feet on something. Better, perhaps, if you have a light blanket toward morning; but we seldom really needed more covering, even on the windy top deck, than the clothing we had with us. If it was

not perfect rest, one never gets much sound sleep in Greece anyway. Deck lodgings gave us the advantage of constant fresh air, of seeing all sunsets and sunrises, of catching the first faint glimpse of land and watching it grow into actual individuality.

The only real drawback was that deck passengers must in theory carry their own food or go without, for the rules forbid their being served in the dining-room. But meals are paid for over and above the ticket even by first-class passengers, hence there is no moral turpitude involved in a deck passenger's bluffing his way into the dining salon. Only once was I driven out unfed. The artist's score was considerably lower, because he lacks that brass-bound nerve, the knowledge that a man is usually taken at his own valuation, which are among the rewards of many years of travel. I could see no wickedness in filing in with persons whose tickets happened to differ in color from my own and sitting down to a meal for which I paid and tipped as much as they; nor could any but a captain-driven head steward or two. But the artist evidently could, if his manner was any criterion. In spite of almost a lifetime in New York City, he is one of those superlatively honest fellows who cannot think of practising the slightest deceit without publishing that fact in box-car letters across their features, shrieking it in their every gesture. That is the trouble with a strict Christian upbringing. Besides, he had the American habit of being careless about his coat; and in Greece the worst felon uncaught is not nearly so low in the social scale as a man in his shirt sleeves.

So it was easier crashing the dining-room after the artist left me—though you need not tell him I said so. My journey alone to Crete will suffice as an example. Toward the end of dinner I saw the waiters putting their heads together, with an occasional side glance at me; and when I left, one of them

slipped up to me in a quiet corner and asked in a very gentlemanly way if he might see my ticket. It was easy to play innocence; and the head waiter had a sense of humor. Besides, they really want your custom, for the profit it brings them, if they can get it without antagonizing the first-class passengers. This particular head waiter told me in smiling French that it was *défendu* for any one with my color of ticket to enter the dining-room, but that it did not matter; and he not only pardoned my oversight this time but thenceforth sent a waiter to tell me whenever the next meal was ready.

The meals, when you could get them, were good, as Greek meals go, and reasonable enough in price to bring scalding tears to the eyes of an American dining-car waiter or steward. Breakfast, of course, was a struggle, and little gained at that; but so it always was on shore. But a several-course lunch and an even more elaborate dinner cost only a hundred drachmas, plus ten percent for service if you like, sometimes whether you like or not; and that means only about \$1.40 a day, including wine *ad lib.* Water, by the way, if, like the artist, you are addicted to that sad form of beverage even in lands where Bacchus is no outlaw, you must carry with you, for there is never any fit to drink on board, except in high-priced bottles.

If the ship's people simply will not serve low-caste persons in the dining saloon, there is usually a poor buffet on board, with some fly-specked ancient-Greek canned goods; or, as happened in the one case in which even I was rebuffed, the French-speaking chef is always glad to make a little on the side; and what, after all, is the difference between a dinner from soup through fowl to ice-cream on a dry-goods box at the galley door and the same meal in a sweltering dining-room? Very great, the Greek of the white-collar class

would reply. For to him there is another overwhelming drawback against deck passage—the loss of caste. But mine was lost so long ago that I have forgotten the date; and the artist lives in New Jersey.

Even American women of the Near East Relief travel on deck in summer, at least between Piræus and Syra. We met some brands of Europeans, even now and then an "American" of Greek extraction, who had overcome this weakness for mere appearance. But the white-collar Greek at home would not think of presenting a deck ticket, even though he never intended to set foot below during the voyage.

The captains were sometimes ignorant grumps; much more often they were courtesy itself, only too eager to point out things of interest along the way, in such French as they could muster, or through an interpreter. Their underlings differed. There was one head steward whom I shall spank if I ever meet him ashore, though it be in my dotage; there were other ship's people, greatly in the majority, for whom I shall buy a drink under the same hypothetical circumstances.

Cost of travel among the Isles of Greece is much increased by the failure ever to tie up to a wharf. Ten drachmas is the legal fare from dock to ship or vice versa, once you find it out and stick to it. Yet twenty-seven cents added to each trip often all but doubled the third-class cost of the journey. The boatmen who row you ashore closely resemble boatmen the world over. In Piræus and on some of the larger islands these indispensable fellows are rough, occasionally even given to the hoary trick of holding up passengers for exorbitant fees between steamer and wharf—though the artist himself was never flattered with that evidence of naïveté in his outward appearance. Most of them were gentle islanders, who shouted vociferously for clients, but did not attempt to cheat customers, not even Americans, though they often did



Hermopolis, the capital of the little island of Syra, is a sight not soon forgotten



This section of Hermopolis, once Venetian, is still Catholic



Looking down upon the Greek Orthodox part of Hermopolis from the crest of the Catholic portion

"Americans." They seemed to feel that those lucky fellow-countrymen just back from the United States, and ipso facto rich, owed them something, and they often got it.

In some places the steamers tie up so close to the dock that we could almost jump ashore—but never quite. We never actually warped up to the wharf at any island, nor at any mainland port except one—Salonika—and there the Government, as a return to the boatmen for the consequent loss of trade, allows them to collect ten drachmas from each passenger anyway! Docks are promised in Piræus, and the same rule is to be in vogue there. But then, think of our plumbers, who in a few years will expect their wages by check without ever coming near us.

Island steamers carry every imaginable commodity: cattle, hoisted by the fore legs out of tossing lighters—in fact, so are automobiles—pigs, goats, sheep. Once a Dodge shared deck-room with a terrified bull. There were dogs and roosters, which, naturally, being of Greek extraction, needed no sleep at night. But they were more likely to be just outside first-class cabin windows than up on the hurricane deck; and at worst the domestic animals were not addicted to garlic. Vegetables from the islands, destined for Athens or Salonika, came on board in huge hampers that were cord-wooded high on the decks, like pigs along the coast of southern China. The empty baskets on their way home took up almost as much space. There were times between important islands when the little steamers were so crowded with peasants and their bundles, with live stock and more silent cargo, that it was impossible to walk, much less stretch out, on deck.

The artist's fingers were always itching for brush or pencil. On every hand were splendid still-life models, reddish pottery water-bottles invariably the keynote of color.

There were hamper-woven wine bottles, huge loaves of bread, tomatoes, cantaloups, watermelons, many other kinds of fruit, turkeys tied by a leg, children who should have been similarly restricted. And always the elusive blue of the Ægean, a swirling mosaic of lapis lazuli, indigo, cobalt, ultramarine, and variations of green in the steamer's wake. Islands like phantom mountains slipping past, small villages built high up their steep slopes, out of fear, at least in olden days, of marauders; the sage-green of olive-trees, the darker green of the fig, the almost black green of the cypress, rising like punctuation marks emphasizing the aridity of the landscape.

For if you found the classics dry, you will find the classic isles still drier. The islands of Greece all more or less resemble heaps of ashes in which only the more hardy forms of vegetation get a foothold and keep it. Even the shores of the mainland have that burned-out slag-heap appearance. But the island towns are different. Some, of unadorned mud bricks, are almost invisible from the deck of a steamer. Others seem to take particular pride in being conspicuous, in presenting, outwardly at least, a spotless front to the world.

Of them all, the most striking, with one possible exception, is Hermopolis. At a little distance the capital and commercial metropolis of the group known as the Cyclades, more than two hundred in number, has the appearance of twin pyramids, each topped by a huge church. A town of shining white houses, almost snow-white beneath the blazing sunshine of the Ægean, rising like a double camp of tents on the gray mountainside curving about a densely blue little bay—it resembles a great capital M.

Though Syra is one of the smaller islands of the Cyclades, its port and only city is an important place, with quite a

metropolitan aspect, especially in the water-front business section. Formerly, in the Middle Ages, the capital was Naxia, on Naxos, largest of this scattered group. But refugees from Chios, when that was taken by the Turks, came to Syra; and a viceroy gave its town the name of City of Hermes—perhaps because he sent out and received so many messengers. When the Venetians held Syra, Hermopolis was the residence of the ruling duke. Capuchin monasteries started on the second hill, and Hermopolis grew upward into its present double-cone shape. Of the two cones the slightly smaller is still Catholic, and always more or less at enmity with the larger Greek Orthodox one.

The wide stone-paved water-front of Hermopolis, as of the principal town of most Greek islands, is not only the landing-place but the café and restaurant section, where men eat and drink, Greek fashion, out of doors. In the late afternoon and evening it is covered with tables and rush-bottomed chairs, and is forbidden to vehicles. Street sitters have precedence over mere traffic in Greece; it is more important to sit comfortably than to get somewhere or do something. Here is a delightful panorama. Many quaint boats ride at anchor or glide about the small but excellent harbor. The men fish by night, with big acetylene lights on the sterns, five hundred or more hooks on a single line; and many strange fish of striking colors come to market against their will. By day, except in the hours devoted to the inevitable siesta, the boatmen sit preparing lights and hooks and spears for the night's fishing.

A little back from the water-front, through streets redolent of the Middle Ages, is the *platia*, a rectangular central square that in a Spanish country would be called the plaza. Here is the town hall, some trees, a band stand, outdoor movies, half the open space covered with café tables and chairs, the rest

a strolling-place. Quaint corners are legion among the white heap of homes of this Greek Orthodox peak of the M, the streets as often stairways as pavements, and plunging every little while through tunnel-like arches that are a brief but welcome relief from the glaring sunshine. My companion's artistic and unjaundiced eye found at every turn something worth painting. In fact, Syra being the first place to which I took him, that he might become gradually inured to the heat, I had a struggle to keep him from putting in the rest of his Grecian summer there.

But it is especially in the Catholic section that the streets are often broad stairways walled by bright stone or mud-brick houses that might have been brought intact from the Middle Ages. The scrubbing-brush and a jar of whitewash are used weekly, we were assured, on those parts of the buildings subjected to finger-marks; and the streets, which are paved with whitish flagstones, are frequently washed with the little water available.

Moreover, the inhabitants still have a Venetian love of color. The calcimine or whatever is used on the house walls has a wide range of hues. Along the stairways all the way up are marine blue, rose, gray-blue, chrome yellows, accentuated to a stage setting in fairyland by the blazing, baking sunshine which never falters from dawn to dark. Blue and white being the national colors of Greece, many families are so patriotic that they paint a broad blue band about the tops of the walls of their box-shaped houses, which are covered with the flat roofs common to the Near East. Others prefer pink or magenta or ochre or violet-colored tops to the white walls, even whole walls of those tints; and the incessant sunshine seems to mellow the colors, so that at first sight one protests that the delicately multicolored and appar-



Hermopolis from the American-maintained orphanage



The orphanage way of baking is common in a large part of the Near East



A class in the N. E. R. Orphanage on Syra. Being natural floor-squatters, Armenians do not mind lack of chairs

ently spotless town which rises tier upon tier up the naked mountainside, and is reflected to its cross-bearing summit in the unearthly Ægean-blue of the bay, is an impossible vision, an incredible mirage. Certainly it is a paradise for an artist in search of the colorful.

The people paint the stone or adobe balustrades of their street-stairways, paint oil tins in all colors and use them as flower pots; with us they would look ludicrous; here they blend perfectly into the scene. It is said that there are sewers in the main part of the town; but because of the animosity that still reigns between the two dogmas, the Catholic portion has none, no running water, no electric lights, so that at night half the M seems to have been blotted out. Indeed, there is an unoccupied space about this section, as if it were the seat of a plague.

The Catholics of Hermopolis have lost the Italian language. But their bishop—or was it archbishop?—of all the Cyclades lives at the tip-top of this smaller pyramid, and speaks a fluent French. Though he is seventy-five, he climbs frequently down and up again, and looks like a lively, well-preserved man of sixty. Syra is very healthful, he assured us over unresined wine. True, the Catholics are the poorer class in Hermopolis. Prejudice keeps them out of jobs, he contended; and it may be that interbreeding and the diseases increased by poverty militate against the inhabitants of the Venetian section. Yet it is clean, scentless compared with many an Italian and even French town; and the view from the bishop's aery is worth the oath of celibacy. His parish includes many islands, half of which he can see on a clear day from where he flaunts his purple skull-cap and booms orders of hospitality to his buxom housekeeper. Looking down upon the Greek Orthodox part of the city, the harbor

and sea and other islands, from the crest of the Catholic portion, makes one forget even the climb to it. Hermopolis is proof that a place need not be dirty to be picturesque.

Yet mere words can give but a weak picture of it; for one must have many colors on one's palette to do justice to the capital of the Cyclades. Go and see it yourself; or in lieu of that, behold some of the paintings, drawings, sketches, daubs, and whatever else it is an artist produces during his productive moods, which constitute that part of my companion's Grecian loot made in clambering up and down those baking stair-streets of Hermopolis, sitting in the scalding sunshine as often as in the shade, always with a friendly, childlike, curious crowd about him.

Balconies were at a premium wherever he painted; the Greeks evidently still believe in art, even if to-day they lump all pictures under the general name of "photographee." A woman with a water-jar on her head, whom he hastily sketched into a drawing, was immortalized, at least among her fellow-townsmen. A boy leaning on the artist's shoulder ran to break the news to her; her man, evidently quitting work for the day on the strength of the honor done him, came sprinting up the public stairway, waving his shoemaker's apron like a triumphant banner; great excitement prevailed in all that nook of Greece.

CHAPTER XVII

AMONG THE CYCLADES

THOUGH it has nothing to do with the story—except that it gave my companion more time to paint there—I lay abed for nearly a week in Hermopolis with belly-ache and fever. I was lucky to have fallen ill, if I must be so foolish at all, in Syra; for there we were guests of the American Near East Relief director and his wife, with hundreds of orphans already on their hands. I shall never forget the entrancing view from my window, when I could reach it: the beautiful harbor backed by that “M” of white Hermopolis, turned a little sidewise from where I lay, like a letter tipped for emphasis. In all that summer’s adventure, that scene was surpassed only by the splendid hospitality of my uncomplaining hosts.

Syra is noted as the home of the largest N. E. R. orphanage in Greece, the most extensive institution of its kind in all the Near East. The half-dozen great stone and brick buildings, resembling some big model factory-school and hospital combined, were erected by the orphans themselves, under the supervision of refugee adults. Having four each of our own, both the artist and I had often wondered how people handle children in car-load lots; and here was the answer. No cut-and-dried rules, no unnecessary repressions, no coddling, yet fatherly and motherly kindness; no theory without practice, no divorce of life and learning—and no unrequited charity. The carpenter class could patch a floor

or a roof, build a whole house, as well as any adult labor-union group. Clothes, shoes, furniture, bedding . . . it made no difference what handicraft was called for, the orphanage was self-contained.

Boys and girls of twelve, even of ten, had all the industry, the serious eye to the task in hand, of men and women dependent on their professions for their continued existence; and a skill which at their ages was incredible. Boys barely in their teens did carving that would make that of almost any American cabinet-maker look like the work of a careless apprentice; the woodwork of wealthy New York youngsters, even under the artist's able training, is, in his own words, silly by comparison.

There was schooling in the usual sense, too; and the orphans were no less serious at their play than in their work. To hear them at their games of soccer and the like on the bare stony playground, at their songs of an evening, or out at the cove where groups of them go in turn for a week's swimming, was to realize that they were not unduly downcast by their parentless state. In short, under the competent couple who added us to their cares, the Syra orphanage made one almost believe the Bolshevik contention that children can be better brought up in institutions by experts than by doting but often ignorant, or unprovided, parents.

The wars that created the orphanage problem are over, for the time at least; but the job is not yet quite done. Possibly, as some unduly practical men contend, it was unwise to have rescued the orphans at all, in a part of the world where human beings are a drug on the market. But having made this initial mistake, it is obviously our duty to complete what we started, to stand behind those still struggling with the problem of clearing up the orphan and post-refugee situation—before another war brings on a new one.

The main task left is to prevent disease and provide sufficient food to keep vitality and energy at par; and it costs barely five dollars a month to feed a Near East Relief orphan. They eat about as much in a week as we do at a meal, yet they are solid as professional gymnasts compared with our flabbiness. Indigence will not overtake us even if we continue their support (which turns into self-support earlier than any one expects of American children) until they are actually on their economic feet. For the post-orphanage problem must not be overlooked. Youngsters take root like plants; the Relief workers still in the field have the important job of transplanting their charges from the orphanages to village or community life. The discharged orphans cannot be casually turned loose where there is no public opinion, no sense of belonging to the community, to urge them into the path of worthy citizenship. A certain oversight is still needed for a year or two after they are discharged, and that oversight costs a little money. We are quite willing to furnish it; but we are prone to forget our first good impulses toward a worthy cause, in the rush of something else.

Syra is noted throughout the Near East for its loucoum or "Turkish delight." Though this most attractive sister of the marshmallow family is made and hawked in many parts of Greece, there is something in Syra's water, atmosphere, or kneading finger that makes its loucoum hors de concours among its competitors. And by the way, a tip, two of them, in fact: do not fail to include a box of Syra loucoum among your Grecian loot; and if in your tourist haste you purchase it of a peddler on a wharf, see that all layers of the box are full before parting with your perhaps hard-earned money.

There are some good roads, but hardly a tree on Syra; and it looks too dry to grow anything. No less an authority

than Homer tells us that Syros was once green and heavily wooded. But like nearly all the Isles of Greece it was half ruined by the destruction of its forests, mainly by pirates and Turks. Yet its dry hills are closely terraced to the very summits, high stone walls holding up tiny fields, and big baskets of vegetables come to Hermopolis on carts, animals, even on men's and women's backs, a million and a half pounds being exported to the mainland yearly.

They say the island is still fairly green from November to May; but now, with no rain whatever since the end of April, it was brown as a desert. It is a limestone island, with pockets of water far below the surface. Wells, exploited by primitive cog-wheeled chains of buckets, irrigate the fields, and must be dug deeper, or new wells sunk, as the water recedes. Dried-up wells are deadly traps for the unwary in the fields; for the Oriental custom of neither covering nor marking them is as prevalent in Greece as in China.

Droves of turkeys—the only Turks left on the island—sometimes hinder the progress of the dozen or two Fords which Syra boasts. Vegetable gardens are protected by bamboo-reed walls against too strong winds, but there are few field-walls or fences. Families build memorial chapels about the island. One rich man's place in a favored little valley was delightful with running water, dense shade, subtropical greenery, quaint with a mixture of ancient Greek and modern European architecture and customs. On the far side of the island is an almost unused beach that would be worth its capacity in champagne near any American city. But what are such advantages to a man so ridiculous as to be confined to bed?

However, only the good die young, and before long the artist and I were on our way again, toward other islands. We sat comfortably on deck all one Sunday, while, as we

suspected at the time and heard later, Athens stewed in a hellish heat that broke all records even in Greece since 1868, except one June day in 1916, when the thermometer verged on explosion. Our first stop was at Tinos or Tenos, a long rocky ridge, easily seen from Hermopolis, dotted far apart and up to near the top of the island with half a hundred villages. Many of them are not whitewashed, and blend into the brown landscape, from which their stone and mud-brick material is taken, as a lizard disappears on a green tree trunk. Most of them, however, stand out like patches of snow in a plowed field.

Climbing fields in ever swifter terraces reached more than half-way to the top of the island. On closer view, all but the highest rock peaks proved to be so closely terraced that the whole sloping side of the island resembled finely lined paper. Green patches of low trees appeared as we approached, and while we flanked the island in leaving it; and a number of the little stone-faced fields were green. But these were mere dots in the great stretch of ash-clinker brown and did little to relieve the island of a depressing aspect of arid sterility.

Yet there are sixty villages on Tinos, assert the statistically minded, besides the port city of the same name. That is a white-and-pinkish town, semicircular about its cove harbor, well built, and with several good hotels and not a few poor ones. In fact, some of the Isles of Greece have better hotels than most cities on the mainland. Tinos has a special reason for them, since it is perhaps the principal pilgrimage place of modern Hellas. The Madonna of Tinos, in an ornate white church only a little climb back of the town, is a big god in the Greek pantheon of to-day. A million dollars' worth of jewels are included among her decorations; luckily, a small island more nearly resembles a safe-deposit vault than does the world at large. The pious come here all the year

round; but the big pilgrimage is on August 15, the Virgin's birthday. Credulous Greeks bring their sick to Tinos whenever possible, and expect miracles—in fact, the list of miracles is printed by the priests beforehand.

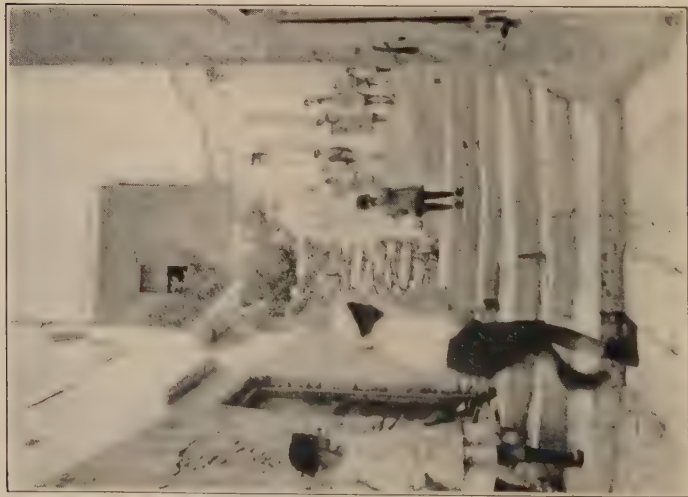
In the pilgrimage season all Ægean steamers stop at Tinos, and the main town swarms with more visitors than even the unusual number of hotels and restaurants and cafés can accommodate. Formerly these pilgrimages had a political aspect and value, in that the priests kept alive the Greek language, creed, and distinct nationality in the general break-up of the Greek nation. Pilgrims came to Tinos from all parts of what was once—and now is again—Greece, while it was under Turkish domination, and were worked up to a patriotic fervor by every possible means, from priestly influence to coffee-house wall chromos. Tinos was the last Venetian holding in the Mediterranean. In 1714 the final ruler from Venice gave it up and went home, to life imprisonment; and the two hundred Catholic families who remained were transported to the shores of Africa by the Turks.

We dropped a few Sunday excursionists, as this was low ebb in pilgrimages, and tumbled off some empty vegetable baskets, like returned milk-cans. In sailing away we passed very close to Delos, once seat of the Delian League by means of which Athens hornswoggled her less sophisticated neighbors. To-day it is on holy Tinos, not on sacred Delos, that pilgrims are relieved of their hard-earned cash. Dry and barren, Delos has no inhabitants now, except a shepherd or two and the caretaker for the famous old ruins.

Parikia, capital of Paros, has many snow-white domed churches, a fifty-foot hill with the ruins of an old castle. But it is the lowest, flattest, least interesting of the island capitals, deadly hot even out in the harbor. Painted row-boats came out from the narrow pier on which most of the



The wide, stone-paved water-front of most Greek islands is not only the landing-place but the coffee-house section



A street in the Catholic section of Hermopolis



The reward of a Greek boot-black at home is low indeed when his client wears the old-fashioned boots

town gathered, seeming to cover it completely to the edges. The arrival of a steamer was evidently their only excitement. Men on horses tore down to the water-front at a frenzied gallop, showing off in that half-shamefaced manner of the unsophisticated before an alien audience the world over. Two old windmills of the Quijote type, snow-white, with brown thatched roofs, added their quaint touch to rather a commonplace landscape.

Naxia, capital of Naxos and once of all the Cyclades, where Ariadne wept and the Mænads danced and sang to Bacchus, is a measly little town, ranging from unpainted granite to dull white. There are no other colors, and we suspected that the people are too poor or too lazy even to whitewash. The inhabitants of this largest island of the Cyclades are said to be unusually indolent, because Naxos is one of the most fertile of the Greek isles, and not so steep that all the soil and water rolls off it. It is shaped like a wide, gently sloping roof, with the principal town at the bottom of one gable. In fact, the town itself is of that shape, culminating in some gray walls of what was evidently once an imposing castle or fortress, backed by a rattlesnake-suggesting hill. Yet Mount Jupiter, the summit of Naxos, is 3290 feet high, and semi-wild mountaineers live in this Greek vertebra fifteen by twenty-one miles in size.

Here we unloaded almost all the empty baskets left, hundreds of them; for Naxos produces many of the vegetables and fruits consumed in Athens. There were a few automobiles and at least one auto-bus, the back-draft of whose inevitable bulb horns jangled our nerves even well out in the harbor. Naxia looked quaint to the artist; and boatmen swarmed about our craft. But it had only about a dozen very narrow streets, of Turkish aspect; and it sees so few tourists that evidently it had not even thought of increasing prices for

visitors. The artist bought four pieces of pottery over which he gloated for hours—a pitcher, a goblet, and two tea-cups, delightfully crude in decoration and workmanship—all for twelve cents. Even here, in one of the richest of the Greek islands, the islanders struck one as rather pitiful, without jobs enough to go round, short even on entertainment, except coffee-house gossip, under-developed in every matter except the art of sitting still.

Ios or Nio, at first a pale-blue blur on the horizon, looked as bare and rocky a place as the others, though it is said to be as green as Ireland part of the year. Away round the corner we entered a long narrow bay, with a white lighthouse, a gleaming white church, and a cluster of white, partly two-story buildings on the water's edge. Here most of the population, all the women at least in gaudy colors, was assembled. Behind, the trail far up the brown terraced hillside was scattered with single white buildings, like dice dropped along the way by fleeing gamblers, clear to what was evidently the principal town, a few others strewn beyond to a tiny white building on the highest bare rock peak. One might have fancied it the route of a migrating people, carrying houses and all with them, of whom a score or two of families had lost heart or strength before they reached the summit beyond which they had determined to settle anew.

The sun was setting as we entered the harbor of Santorin (Saint Irene), known to the ancients as Thera. This perhaps most striking of the many Greek islands is the mere shell of an ancient volcano, with its principal city built for miles along the rim of what was once the crater, twelve hundred feet above the bottomless harbor. The huge ring of the submerged volcano is broken in two places, forming the main island and a smaller one, called Therazia, that is virtually

uninhabited. Visiting ships sail through a gap in the prodigious walls; but they do not anchor. For though it is big enough for all England's fleet, being six miles in diameter, the crater is too deep for anchorage, so that vessels tie up to buoys which are in turn fastened to the crater wall.

Santorin resembles the wide-open mouth of some mighty prehistoric monster, about to swallow the smaller fragment of the rim and the two forbidding cinder-heaps of islands, one of them a semi-active volcano, inside the great harbor. In certain lights this smoking island looks like a huge pile of soft coal, in others like black scoriæ, as if the harbor of Santorin were the dumping-ground for all the scraped boilers of the seven seas. Lava cuts the shoes of those who row over to it; and the fumes and heat are as of a smoldering giant blacksmith's forge banked for the night. From time to time it gives off noxious gases, even blows up now and then, though the old crater itself is dead and harmless. The harbor vent-hole had, in fact, irrupted only fifteen months before; yet people persist in living there, as on the slopes of Stromboli, Etna, Vesuvius, such is the magic of birthplace and home.

Marvelous colors flame in that old crucible of nature, especially at twilight, when the sea-filled crater suggests the gateway to Dante's inferno. Sheer ochre-tinted cliffs pitch headlong down into the basin of bluest water. Rich blacks merge into purples and blues, with ripples of vermilion and lilac playing through the more somber masses. The prevailing ash-gray tone is streaked here and there with splashes of sienna; the greens of some daring bushes that have insisted on their right to live give the finishing touch to a weird ensemble.

The city of Thera is pitched so precariously on the very lip of the water-filled crater, hundreds of feet above, that

the houses seem to be trembling in the very act of starting on a mad race down the mighty slope into the sea. The town, just a streak of white and pink along the high narrow ridge of earth as seen from below, stretches for miles between the steep stairways to it at either end; and away off, high on other parts of the sharp ridge, are other white hamlets. In the setting sun the windows sparkled with all the reds and yellows in the paint-box. Quijote windmills in prominent positions turned briskly in the breeze—though it was after eight o'clock on a Sunday evening, the end of the long Grecian twilight. One would hardly expect a swallow to think of building a home here. But the Near East is a crowded world and the outer slopes of Santorin grow a special kind of grape, from which a delicious and high-priced wine is made.

The usual hubbub of boatmen was here doubled by scores of donkey- and mule-men, howling for clients about the wharf village cut into the foot of the cliff. A well-built road of great blocks of lava perfectly fitted together climbs zig-zagging to the town, a road steeper than any man-made stairway, mounting nearly a thousand feet before it reaches anything. People are sometimes killed in the port village and landing-place by stones from above; and one suspects that the inhabitants of Thera have to be careful in handling pots and similar utensils. Except for its situation and shape, the crescent town is not very different from the main one of other Greek islands; but the site itself is worth coming far to see. Besides the lava there is a tufa-like material, which crumbles like the loess of western China. Foundations and sometimes the houses themselves are dug in this, and as there is little timber, most buildings are roofed with barrel-vaults of stone and cement. Many Santorin residents have to build only the front walls of their houses. Here and there

enterprising individuals have dug caves for themselves in the crater walls, and from many a tiny opening a candle-light twinkled. It was all like a strange dream, or a colossal background for some movie in which the scenic staff had been allowed full play to its imagination, a movie in which the grotesque could not be exaggerated.

Melos, which we know as Milo, is also the crater of a submerged volcano, naked stone masses towering aloft from the water. But there the world-wide fame of the armless Venus it has bequeathed to mankind is the best reason for a visit. For when all was seen and done we agreed that while all the Isles of Greece are worth seeing, Hermopolis is their chief beauty and Santorin their dramatic climax.

CHAPTER XVIII

WITHIN GUN-SHOT OF TURKEY

THE captain of another little steamer we patronized to the extent of a deck passage from Syra to Mytilene was from Psara, and took pleasure in recounting its fame. This burnt and bushless isle, with a miserable little town of two or three churches and a dozen other more or less whitewashed buildings, was the home of Kanaris, the sailor who made himself a canoe and burned the whole Turkish fleet, over on the coast of Chios. There remain some dull ruins of what was here until that conspicuous event in 1821, after which date the Turks did not permit Greeks on Psara, until the sultan lost it in 1912. There are numbers of rounded towers, all somewhat broken, a few old grain-grinding windmills, one still intact. An arid brown landscape in which green is almost unknown, this patch of earth is not even worth terracing, though it is productive of grapes. Certainly tiny Psara is an unprepossessing island for a place so famous in modern history.

We passed within sight of Rhodes, after dark, but for some reason the Colossus was not lighted that evening. To visit this Greek-inhabited but Italian-governed isle is a task of some magnitude. Greek steamers avoid it and the cluster of smaller islands that have suffered its fate, so that one must go to Italy or some port of Asia Minor to reach it. Then, too, the visit, however short, requires an Italian visa; and ten-dollar bills do not grow on currant-bushes in the

gardens of mere artists and scribblers. Moreover, if no other hitch occurs in the proceedings, there is at least the added drawback of having to keep under one's hat for the duration of the stay one's opinion on Mussolinis in general, no simple job for a man inclined by temperament and training to speak his mind.

Our information concerning the pedestal of the late-lamented and once far-famed forerunner of our Statue of Liberty is, therefore, confined to a cautious word now and then from some traveling Greek wrathfully nursing an Italian passport. From these meager sources we gathered that Rhodes is similar in form and semi-activities and customs to other Ægean islands, mountainous and under-watered—and ominously silent, wherever the walls might have ears, on the régime which has compelled the inhabitants to pose as Italian subjects.

Though Cyprus is still sometimes hopefully included in the mind of a Greek when he speaks of the "unredeemed" Isles of Greece, he really means the Dodecanese, that rather scattered group of a dozen islands along the eastern shores of the Ægean, or the western coast of Turkey, of which Rhodes is the largest and best known. Next in size is Karpathos, then Kos, with the great plane-tree of the physician Hippocrates. Patmos, in a cavern of which Saint John saw a heavenly vision that gave him material for one of his anecdotes, is another of these scraps of land, some of them uninhabited. They total 981 square miles and sustain a little more than a hundred thousand population. Not ten percent of these are Turks, and most of those are on Rhodes (though outnumbered even there four to one by the Greeks), with only a scattered few on the other islands. Sponge-fishing is about the only industry, except raising their own scanty living.

Rhodes, cross-roads (no pun intended) of the northeastern Ægean in olden times, once rich and powerful and proud—and no doubt toward the end correspondingly lazy—won her independence along with the nucleus of the new Greece in 1826, but was traded back to the Turks for Eubœa. Italy began her occupation in 1912, during her war with Turkey over Tripoli, as (so she told the world) a temporary, conditional arrangement. Came the Balkan, then the World War, and finally Mussolini, all of which disasters left her no time to keep her promise to return the Dodecanese to Turkey—or to Greece, Turkey's heir to anything found lying loose in the Ægean. There has never been a formal decree of annexation, but Mussolini has made some remarks, and you have three guesses as to what chance the Greeks have of getting Rhodes and its chicks back in the immediate future. The exact answer, of course, is—just about as soon as they recover Cyprus.

"The Turks had a bad system of government, but it didn't work," say the Rhodesians or the Dodecanesians or whatever they call themselves whenever they dare to say they are anything but Italians. "The Italians have taken the Turk system and made it work; so the people are doubly unhappy." In 1921 the Italians arrested and deported the Greek Archbishop of Rhodes and some others because the clergy did not attend the festivities in honor of the Italian Crown Prince. An Italian naval base has already been constructed at Leros, and one is planned at Rhodes, where elaborate new municipal buildings have been erected. Venizelos got Italy to sign a treaty agreeing to return all but Rhodes (which also was to go to Greece if so decreed by a plebiscite to be held fifteen years after England gave back Cyprus!), provided Greece did not interfere with Italy's schemes on the Turkish mainland. But Kemal made that no quid pro quo;



A Greek-American meeting "the old folks at home" for the first time since his sixteenth birthday



A crowd of women and girls about a trickling faucet or spring is one of the most familiar sights in Greece



A woman of Mytilene, weaving in her little den-like house, just as her ancestors have for many centuries

and McDonald himself withdrew his protest against the rape of the Dodecanese when Italy agreed to demand less in Somaliland, adjoining British East Africa. Among European diplomats, one hand still washes the other, even in Labor circles.

The text of a new treaty which Venizelos on his return to power has negotiated with Italy and France makes no mention of the Dodecanese. The inhabitants of these "unredeemed" islands had hoped and even half expected that the national hero would rescue them; but thus far their petitions to the Greek Government and to patriotic societies imploring deliverance from the foreign yoke have not changed by a shade the color of their passports.

Nor, though we hobbled along for hours within plain sight of it, did our languid craft deign to set foot on Samos, twenty-seven-mile-long birthplace of the philosopher Pythagoras and of Polycrates the tyrant, refuge of the fleet of Xerxes the Persian, and once of Alcibiades, elected general of the Athenian army. We were, in fact, coasting within ancient cannon-shot of Ionia, part, along with the Lydia of Croesus behind it, of that remnant of the late Turkish empire which is now miscalled the Turkish Republic.

The principal port of Chios, most important stop en route to Mytilene, is so close to Turkey that you can see villages on the peninsula that all but became an island, behind which lies Smyrna. Homer's native isle, where Matthew or Mark—or was it Luke?—hired a studio long enough to write one of the Gospels, is very mountainous, with a high, gray central ridge, but with many patches of green, especially on its lower slopes. Lemons and oranges grow abundantly in the densely green groves, faced by fine beaches, which run back in little V-shaped valleys that are finally strangled among the mountains. Much of the island is covered with small trees

resembling both the cherry and the scrub pine, a tree which produces no fruit, yet brings the inhabitants of Chios considerable wealth. It is the producer of mastic, used in painter's varnish and as chewing-gum—though Greece is far behind us in this latter form of sport—and as a liqueur.

Next to its pitch-ruined wine the most atrocious convivial misfortune befalling the traveler in Greece is the frequent necessity of getting rid of, without actually consuming, a glass of mastika—that licorice-tasting liquid which turns milk-white when water is added, and is more repulsive, even to a man fond of wine, than any medicine. The mastic gum is gathered like maple-sap or rubber-juice, but without cutting the bark. Apparently merely to flourish an ax or a knife near it is sufficient, for the tree “weeps” at the mere thought of being wounded. Venders come on board offering packages of mastic for mastication, if I understood them, and sealed bottles of the stuff in its beverage form.

Our first stop on Xios (as one may also spell it, when in a hurry) was in an open harbor backed by half a dozen small buildings, where my afternoon swim nearly paralyzed all beholders with astonishment. I gathered that getting wet all over is the rarest of Greek adventures, especially among those who have the heavenly blue Ægean at their door-steps. Volissos, climbing the side of a small hill and crowded together by an old wall, lay well inland, behind another hill, as if it had fled beyond the danger of being tempted to bathe. Old stone towers decapitated of their windmills lent the place a resigned air.

The cliffs of Chios are very striking by moonlight; and for three hours of it we crawled along the very base of them. Night means nothing to the Greeks, except a better time than day; so when we landed at the capital of Chios toward

midnight it was like sailing into the midst of a garden party. The well-paved water-front, surely sixty feet wide—though I am too lazy to take measurements and abhor exact statements—is the scene of a perpetual Fourth of July. All but a narrow central lane along it was covered with café and restaurant tables, with an orchestra for each establishment. One of these, consisting of a woman and six men, sat in a raised stand on a street corner, still crooning to the night and the now slowly departing clients. Farther on, a larger stand, where perhaps dancing takes place, had already been abandoned. But crowds still lingered. Colored lights and gay paper banners enlivened the scene, and every one seemed to be enjoying himself to the utmost without any of the hubbub and strenuous trying we Americans are wont to put into our fun. We are not so bad at work; but it needs only a few days in a country such as Greece to remind one again that we are less spontaneous at play.

The stern of our ship all but touched this night-club street. Men in the steamer chairs could converse in an ordinary tone with those at the tables—if Greeks ever used that tone. Yet we had to be rowed ashore, for all that; though the round-trip cost only ten drachmas to those of us who were not obliged to land and were therefore in a position to bargain. Late as it was, we remembered some old adage anent the wisdom of misbehaving oneself in Rome, and went for a walk. All the inhabitants, even small children, were still up, families sitting before their respective homes, in uncomfortable chairs, chatting, babbling incessantly about nothing, long after midnight. Here and there a young man was “playing the bear,” as our Mexican neighbors call love-making through window-bars. Overhanging second stories, protruding shutters partly open, a pretty little mosque, dome

and minaret still intact, though now a museum, recalled the history of Chios. Its Turkish atmosphere is still by no means all gone, though never a veil did we see.

We were very near the Asia Minor mainland here; could, in fact, have seen it plainly by daylight. There were electric lights, new old-style Fords (at the top of the Golden Stairs, after I have labored up them on foot, only to be ordered down again, I expect to find a nice shining Ford, perhaps with Saint Peter's initials on the doors, standing serenely at the celestial curb and looking as much at home as on a Detroit boulevard) and good roads; at least they started out as such from the edge of the flat but gently rising town, though we were in no position to inspect them far into the interior. Besides, the artist, whose artistry includes the torturing of several instruments in his home-town orchestra, had been much taken by the scene along the quay. There was a delightful lilt to the old-fashioned music, lots of life in it, yet sudden changes of key to minor chords that spoke of Turkish influence, a mournful strain that recalled the centuries of suffering and humiliation of the Greeks under Turkish rule. The players used a zither, striking it with tiny mallets, huge mandolins (one with two finger necks), a bass viol; and now and then they all broke out in singing. Most of the numbers had an entrancingly barbaric twang and were jazz-like in their strongly marked rhythm. I thought from the first that it was unusually attractive music, but dared not say so until the artist had given it his expert appraisal.

In fact, he was on the verge of tears of regret when two blasts of the steamer's whistle warned us it was safer to get on board. For though steamers of the Ægean "plan" to whistle once an hour before sailing, twice half an hour before, and three times just in time to save belated passengers from being left behind, they have a way of forgetting

one or all of the warnings, particularly of giving that triple blast after they are well under way and some one has remembered to remind those not on board that they have been left behind. And it is a long time between steamers on many a Greek island.

Stay ashore awaiting the three whistles and your chances of remaining much longer are excellent; come on board just before this final warning and you are almost as sure to lose what might have been a long last stroll. Greeks, including their steamers, are like that. Hence it goes without saying that we might have sat not only half an hour longer on the quay but for another hour after the final warning. By that time it was long after midnight, as you may have guessed. But what is midnight in Greece? The enticing music was still caressing the night air when we sailed away again out of the garden party, just as it does every night, Sundays included. For the Greeks have the same comfortable point of view on Sabbath observance as the Roman Catholics (and an increasing number of Protestants), that so long as you go to church in the morning it does not much matter what you do or refrain from doing with the rest of the day, provided you do no unnecessary work; and that, after all, is not merely a religious taboo.

The large island of Mytilene or Lesbos does not herd with the others. It sits aloof on the edge of Turkey, as if not quite decided as to preference of allegiance. Unlike most Greek islands, except to some extent Chios, Mytilene, where "violet-waving, pure, sweet-smiling Sappho" lived and poetized, is fairly well covered with trees—olives, pears, figs, with lots of grape-vines in spots. But the brown soil shows through everywhere, as if the nap of a once-green rug had been worn off with age and much use; and except for the tall platania trees, like cypresses, in a few narrow little

seaside valleys, none suggest shade. The implacable sun is always with you, like death and taxes and venal politicians.

Yet Mytilene is decidedly Greek, for all that. There never were many Turks there, or on Chios, close as these islands are to the Turkish mainland. In fact, Smyrna itself had only a hundred thousand, as against twice that many Greeks, before the exchange of populations. In the capital town of each island there were the vali, a kind of vice-sultan, and the customs men, but they were about the only Turks; the islands being largely autonomous so long as they paid the sultan his rake-off in taxes and kept his henchmen satisfied.

As we anchored off Plomaron, a carelessly whitewashed town piled up rather a bare hillside, and our first port in Mytilene, early that Sunday morning after leaving Chios, a bright young man from Waterbury, Connecticut, met his family for the first time since late boyhood. He was not only an American citizen but seemed completely Americanized, with not even the trace of a foreign accent left. One never gets through marveling at the power of quick absorption of our country, our ability to give new-comers our virtues and our faults in record time. The parents he had left behind some twenty years before came out in a boat to greet him. The father was still a sturdy middle-aged man; but his mother looked like a worn-out drudge of sixty, as if she were his grandmother. Mothers do not keep well among the working or middle classes in Greece.

It must also have been a shock to our law-created fellow-countryman to find his birthplace so run-down a town, compared with Waterbury. You know how much poorer and smaller your home town looks at best after a long time away; even if it is picturesquely climbing its hillside. But at least there was a fine seascape—which means escape, back to

Waterbury; and one can imagine that going home to see the old folks is a welcome antidote to these Greek-Americans, perhaps unconsciously worn out with the rush and hubbub of American life. Yet well we knew that he would soon long for the high tension of his adopted land again.

Mytilene, the capital, from which the island now takes its name, was several hours farther on. Here for the first time our Greek passports—cute little books of a dozen pages, in pink tissue-paper covers, bearing our handsome likenesses caricatured by itinerant park-hunting photographers, and containing a lot of perhaps truthful information to those who read Greek (though, come to think, some of it was also in French)—were taken away from us. Mytilene is almost within stone's throw of Turkey, too near to be careless in the matter of arriving aliens, so plainly in view that it cannot but be a constant reminder. So, while the police were polite, and the harbor master in white uniform, who spoke English, was hospitality personified, they pocketed the documents and told us to ask for them when we wished to leave the island. That harbor master was an exception to the linguistic rule. I often wondered why some of the million or so of returned "Americans," many in as sad a state as missionaries expelled from China, are not more often appointed to the police force. Get out of political touch during their absence, I suppose.

Mytilene has a delightful water-front, along which danced scores of those ecstasies of Ægean ship-building, sail-boats like marine fairies, with all the joy of life in their smart sails. It is impossible to make the colors too bright in sketching them. Orange and gray alternate with reds and blues and greens, run in strips from stem to stern, emphasizing the exquisite lines. The boats are passed on from father

to son, and the innate artistry of the Greek masses finds an outlet in the decorations the owners love to place on any available space.

Peasants from the interior, in "unimproved" costumes, stand about and stare at the ceaseless activities of the quays. We strolled along them, fascinated by the brilliancy of the colorful changes at every step, the endless stalls of luscious fruit for sale at absurdly low prices. But man is a perverse creature; we each made a grab into a little basket of green apples in one of the booths, so surfeited were we with the finest fruits of every kind except of our beloved national favorite.

Not so enticing was the smell of fish and rancid olive-oil from the warehouses. Boats with quaint prows were bringing in thousands of cantaloups and watermelons, which seemed to be the chief occupation at this season. Watermelons, excellent in taste, were so plentiful that they were cheaper than any other beverage, and at least as cool as any water available on Ægean islands. But ice-cream, at three cents a dish, could be had after four o'clock. Perhaps it was only because it was Sunday that the cafés were full of men. The restaurant we entered was short on French-speaking waiters, which is unusual in Greece. For dessert there was cheese, white and crumbly, in goatskins, hair inside; we liked the cheese but not the hair.

But the day was seething its hottest. Luckily the hotel was close at hand, the Megale Vretania, which in French would be Grande Bretagne; and at least it was not expensive. We struggled to be Greek and take a nap. Ah, those Grecian midday naps, akin to Turkish baths! It was more pleasant to slip on as few garments as possible and stroll the quays again.

A few men wore an old costume like that of the presi-

dential guards in Athens, a bright-red kind of liberty cap of the days of the French revolution, with a black horsetail tassel. An old mosque was divided into a dozen refugee homes by dirty, ragged old burlaps, breast-high and easy to peer over into the bosom of the family. Not the best possible homes for girls in their later teens, one would think. Indeed, one family lived out on the open porch.

Farther on, behind an evergreen grove that had the appearance, incongruous in Greece, of a tree nursery, was the ruin of a huge old fortress of stone, still filled with Greek soldiers; for Asia Minor, the abode of their arch-enemy, Turkey, is just opposite across a narrow strait, stretching from horizon to horizon. Childish soldiers, with no officers in sight, no system, as in all other Greek matters. But easier-going than the soldiers of the new Turkey, so that we talked ourselves in with little trouble. Then out through the dust of the outskirts for a swim in a shallow cove among concealing rocks. A swim for me, that is; the artist is too modest a man to disrobe within spy-glass view of boats riding at anchor. The Sunday evening strolling crowds were thick when we wended our way back to the alleged hotel.

CHAPTER XIX

TOURING MYTILENE

IN the morning I asked the artist to try his luck at finding some means of breaking our fast. I was tired of always interpreting; if you have ever done so for weeks on end, you know what I mean. It was high time he became self-supporting. And he, good-natured and self-sacrificing man, went forth, and lo, quickly ran to earth a restaurant keeper who had lived in Texas, who vociferously asserted his ability to perform a real American breakfast, and came fairly near to making good his boast.

Things went fast and furiously that morning—for the Ægean. Just as we emerged from the ex-Texan's ministrations a big Berliet motor-bus came squeezing its way through the narrow street. Caring little where we went, so long as we were on our way, we sprang aboard, hailed the driver in English. He replied, as calmly as if he had been driving a bus through the Holland Tunnel, that he was going out to a near-by village, as soon as he had collected some passengers. For all his fluency, however, he seemed diffident, was almost taciturn, a most extraordinary trait in Greek "Americans." Perhaps he mistook us for detectives, or had a grievance against the United States, unlike all his fellows; or it may merely have been fear of running out of English.

There were hot baths at the village, into which our fellow-passengers, all women, rather reluctantly disappeared. The artist being in no mood to follow, we drifted away through

an endless olive orchard. The driver had told us where to find an olive-tree said to be two thousand years old, which looked older. Beyond the first several thousand descendants of this patriarch we stumbled upon a village obviously once largely Turkish. In their little dark houses the women, as in many other parts of Greece, were weaving cloth for the home or for the market, on just as crude and almost as ingenious an apparatus as in China. Having few trees, the islanders make their houses of stone or adobe. Women carry the mud from pits in which men knead it by hand and foot, to the place where other men turn it into bricks to be baked in the sun. Tiles of the same material are deftly fashioned by a man with a wooden frame and experienced mud-patting hands. In some parts of Greece—Old Phaleron, for instance—the flat roofs are made of sawed stone fitted together, like clever trepanning.

It was high time we went across an island, or at least well into the interior. On the way back with the bathed women we mentioned that fact to the taciturn bus-driver. He would attend to it, we gathered. We were deep in the mysteries of lunch at our hotel restaurant, closed on Sunday, when two brothers came in to offer their services. The older and livelier of them was one of the few Greeks we met who knew more than two or three American cities. He had "bummed all over the States," he asserted, and then dropped the subject, as if it were a sore one; later we discovered a possible reason why. At the door stood a Ford pitiful in every square inch of its surface. I cannot picture to you how senile that Ford looked; there are none so far gone in the United States, at least outside a "graveyard."

"You want to ride up into the island?" asked the livelier brother.

We looked at the flivver and laughed.

"How old do you think is this car?" he demanded, with some heat.

"Oh, about fifteen years" ventured the artist—in all good faith, being, unlike his sons, no mechanic, nor given to sarcasm.

"Hell! Nine month," snorted the owner. "I use him every day; carry mails and freight. Take you center of the island, back in the morning, one hundred dracks each one."

We understood the battered appearance of that Ford before we had gone many miles along the road it had traveled twice daily during its nine months of existence. The more silent brother drove us out of town. In the outskirts we stopped to pile in a cart-load of freight. Smugglers, perhaps, our two good brothers; or avoiding the payment of some town export tax; bootlegging something prohibited in Greece, whatever that may be. Another passenger joined us, but we had contracted for first-class passage, which throughout the Near East means the back seat. The three Greeks crammed themselves into the front. The lively brother took over the steering-wheel—had no license, perhaps, hence could not drive in town—and only then did we discover that he had lost a hand; a memento, possibly, of his hobo days. In place of it he wore an iron hook.

The artist was aghast. Yet he of the missing hand proved a far better driver than his brother; and a wild ride it was in that crippled outfit. Cardboard patches, where glass should have been, flapped in the breeze; every bolt and detachable part rattled in a Wagnerian symphony. We tore on over roads bordering upon frightful ravines, crossed high bridges where guard-rails are considered useless ornaments. The skill of that hook-handed driver was incredible, his confidence monumental; also he had a certain faith in his guardian angel, for at every perilous spot—and there were scores

of them—he removed his good hand from the wheel and crossed himself, with only the hook between us and destruction. The artist now and then drew a breath; ever and anon he called my attention to a close shave. I happened to be reading. My fellow-traveler thought me cruel not to worry with him. But I had already been months in the Near East, with many miles behind native drivers over just such roads. Nor was this anything compared with riding the upper deck of a mule along the sheer edge of the loess canyons of western China.

We wound in and out through endless olive orchards, up and down appalling grades, swirled complacently around the sheer edge of nothing. Every pocket of earth large enough for a dog-house had its olive-tree, and this single tree had its own stone terrace. The terraces climbed in endless succession to the very tops of most of the hills. There being none along the Palisades he descends daily, the artist was more struck than I, who had seen them so often, by the tortured shapes of many of the old olive-trees of Greece. For the seeker after the grotesque an old olive orchard is a delight. Each tree seems carved with gargoyles and goblins, in painful contortions; each looks as if it were engaged in grim combat with its fellows, in a conspiracy to keep the others from getting up in the world. Yet every squatty, twisted tree is always diligently producing fruit, and will bear for centuries.

Higher up, toward the gray rock top of the island, wheat grew in small steep patches. Scrub oak appeared as we mounted still higher. Charcoal in bags came down on horses. Vineyards bloomed in unlikely soil. There were entrancing views behind and nerve-racking ones below. Of two big lakes we had skirted, the British fleet was soon to occupy one—England treats Greece almost as a semi-subject. A

town down on the lake level had been deathly hot; up here the air was cool. We passed a monastery in a choice situation, far below. The valleys were marvels of color; oleanders in all their glory, in gradations of red from pink to maroon, in delightful contrast to the dark-green cypresses, bloomed along the dry watercourses. Months of intense heat without a drop of rain did not seem to have dulled their ambition. Our driver poked fun at the fact that the islanders had been praying for rain in the churches, but he continued to cross himself at every dangerous turn.

There were no inhabitants whatever except in the villages, stony hamlets in remote valleys that echoed back to us the clatter of our disreputable Lizzie. Some of them were punctuated with minarets, beheaded minarets in most cases, that looked down upon two-story dwellings roofed in faded varicolored tiles. Almost the first thing the Greek does when he wrests territory from the Turk is to destroy or desecrate the mosques, and he rubs salt in the wound by leaving half-minarets standing. In turn, the Turk wrecks Greek churches, unless they can be turned into stables or warehouses. Skalo Khorio, a stone town high up in the interior, in a stony hollow down below the road, was once so Turkish that three minarets still rise above it. At the café which serves it as station, liter bottles of delicious cherry juice, making lukewarm water many times more drinkable, sold at about twenty cents. Here Asia Minor was just across a narrow blue strait; territorially Mytilene belongs rather to Turkey than to Greece.

Here and there a stone wall was flung like a lasso about some little field far up the hillside, with a side wall running clear down to the town below, as if the owner were holding onto it by main force. Almost as scantily wooded as the other Isles of Greece, Mytilene had some trees left in the

highland valleys. Charcoal-burners were cutting down splendid oaks, turning the trunks into lumber by the two-man sawmill method, and heaping up the branches in very symmetrical haystack form, a strikingly careful pile, to be covered with earth and reduced to charcoal to cook city folks' food.

Then at last we saw Vatusa, our destination, across a great chasm. It was a completely stone town—streets, houses, door-jambs, everything, even the heads of the inhabitants, perhaps. Here, at last, surely we were far enough away from the outside world to find no "Americans." There was an excellent hotel, the driver said. But by this time experience had taught even the artist not to register surprise at finding it a primitive native inn on the outskirts, where we had the inevitable struggle to get edible food and succeeded only by relentless insistence in having the ancient sheets on the springless beds changed. The frames of Greek beds are of iron, and when the springs give out the poverty-stricken Hellene lays boards across the sides and there you are, equipped for a sleepless night even if, as in this case, there are no colonies of minute fauna of many species to keep you company.

No "Americans" indeed! Even the innkeeper had been in the United States, though he had lost whatever English or culinary information he had brought back with him. I climbed into the town, built in layers up the rocky mountain-side. Of a score of men loafing in the shade about the café, at least ten spoke up in English, one after another. The fat old priest in a dirty white beard and a dirtier gown pretended to be scornful, but all the others expressed their deep regret either that they had never been to America or that they had come back, and all the latter voted vehemently with the man who said, "I was one damn fool." Out of this

isolated village of nine hundred inhabitants two hundred men had gone to the United States, and only about fifty had returned. Many of these had come home sure that they would never want to go back, and within a month were ruing, when it was too late, their lack of foresight. It costs so little to get return papers, or even an American passport (too little, to my notion, for the alien-born), "and you don't have to go back, even if you have the papers, unless you want to"—a fact at which some of the stay-at-homes showed astonishment. While the men sat on rush-bottomed chairs in and along the stone street beneath dry-leaf arbors fronting the café—also kept by an ex-American—most of the women and girls in town were awaiting their turn for water at a trickling fountain beyond.

Meanwhile the artist had found interior Mytilene a painter's paradise, especially toward evening. The whitish-gray mountains were transformed into gold masses with deep purple shadows, sharply silhouetted against the sunset sky. Savage crags, grim and cruel-looking in the fierce glare of the sun, became more friendly in their evening colors. And the oleanders, cypresses, chestnut-trees against the brown hillsides, dappled here and there by fig and olive, made an inimitable background for peasant scenes or mule-trains passing with a gentle tinkle of bells.

Our coming was a gross unkindness to the café-keeper uptown. For the male population of Vatusa was attracted like moths to flame by our presence. Half the men in town, including a younger priest, seemed to have come down to see us eat, to hear whatever we had to say, obviously hungry for the atmosphere of the United States they knew so well at least by hearsay. Most of those who gathered in the inevitable reed-seated chairs before our sorry inn wore high boots below unwashed knees, heavy rough clothing of the old style,



Charcoal-burners preparing a heap of oak branches among the high hills of Mytilene



Villagers of the mountains of Mytilene



An official of Mount Athos

and what resembled Russian fur caps. Greek mountaineers are a dignified and a quiet people, and it was hard to judge from their stern faces whether they viewed us and our professions, or lack thereof, with admiration or contempt. They were fine models in an unconscious pose—or if they were aware of the artist's efforts to transfer them to paper they stolidly avoided the appearance of being interested; really wanted to be painted, perhaps, in memory of olden days.

They sat about us all evening until we turned in, showing off their knowledge of English and of the United States. The few who knew neither were sad indeed, shamefaced, though some tried to cover it with a hint of scorn. And in the morning, after an almost cold night, we were awakened long before we wanted to leave our plank beds, by talk of America below our window. All the village had gathered again—if indeed it had not sat there all night—had laid aside any work it had to do, and was prepared to stick with us until we departed.

The hook-armed man had taken his Ford apart the evening before, had worked all night on its viscera, and still it persisted in sulking. It would have been a pitiful sight to see him struggling in his handicapped state to lift out and put together again the heavy motor, to perform mechanical feats that demanded at least two good hands, had he not been so uncomplainingly cheerful about it. And our steamer was to leave that afternoon at two. We were worried, though he had sworn on his American honor to get us back in time.

Nor had his residence among us been in vain. For did he abandon us, alleging kismet, act of God, as most of his fellows of the Near East would have done? He did not. He sent to a neighboring town for another Ford-owner, a fellow less skilled at the wheel than he of the hook but who crossed himself still more ardently and often, to drive us back over that perilous path. I rather preferred his religious ardor to

the almost American cynicism of the ex-hobo. The Lord might not help him, but if he was constantly thinking of the need for celestial attention surely he would be less foolhardy. Or it may have been the string of blue beads wrapped around his radiator cap which brought us safely through. Blue beads adorn not only babies, horses, donkeys, mules but almost every motor-car in Greek Christian as well as Moslem parts of the Near East. For it is generally agreed in that part of the world that they bring good luck, or at least drive off bad luck, avert the evil eye, keep misfortune away from any form of transportation. And no doubt they do, for we reached the port not only whole and in time to take the steamer but with enough to spare for a lunch beforehand, even as Icarus of the hook had promised.

CHAPTER XX

A LAND WITHOUT WOMEN

IT was exasperating to find that although Mount Athos, our next objective, is a mere jaunt cross-lots from Mytilene, by way of ancient Lemnos, there was no steamer in that direction for several days to come, if then. Once more we had to go all the way back to Piræus for a fresh start. And when, after two nights on the decks of as many steamers, and two railway journeys, we reached the Macedonian capital the following Saturday, the first information was that the next boat for Mount Athos would leave the next Thursday—perhaps.

But a moment later eager runners for another line quickly put us in touch with a steamer leaving in just time enough for us to eat and drink, give Salonika another once-over, and pay a boatman for watching us step on board the saddest craft we traveled on that summer. This time there was no choice, nor any dread of losing caste, for in the complete absence of cabins or dining-room nothing but deck passage was available.

Armenian families, bound to some port farther on, Cavalla in Macedonia or Dédéagatch in Thrace, lived on their blankets along the deck as contentedly as at home, adaptable but rather disgusting, especially with a heavy wind and some sea. Several beards among the passengers; and in Greece whiskers always mean priest or monk. One bearded old fellow resembling a filthy tramp dressed in what had once long ago been a

monk's garb, slept beneath a life-boat on some dog-kennel rags he carried with him. It is too bad some one who has never before left our happy homeland cannot describe that night's trip to you.

Away up beyond Salonika, one of three peninsulas shaped like the fingers of a mutilated hand pokes its long rhinoceros snout out into the Ægean. On the tip end of it a shapely rock peak rises more than six thousand feet into the clouds, and gives the entire peninsula its European name. What we know as Mount Athos is not exactly an island, though it is nearly enough one to be included among the Isles of Greece. For Xerxes the Persian, you remember, caused to be dug across the low narrow neck of it a canal, through which to astonish the ancient Greeks. But the canal silted up again centuries ago, and to-day it is about as difficult to get to Mount Athos except by sea as to any of its neighbors, the real Greek islands.

We had found Mount Athos hard to reach, too, not merely because of poor transportation. Even the most educated or Americanized Greeks looked blank when we asked about it, and mumbled something in lieu of that expression forbidden throughout the Orient, "I do not know." In time we learned that its Greek name is ἉΓΙΟΝ ΟΡΟΣ, Aghion Oros, which means the Holy Mountain. The whole peninsula became monasterial territory in the ninth or tenth century and is still the property of the Greek Orthodox Church. The Greek Government, however, insists on keeping at least a nominal oversight upon it—wherefore Church and State there are motes in each other's eyes. The monks recently appealed to the League of Nations to intervene and give them complete control.

The first faint dawn, altogether too early, showed the striking silhouette of Athos mountain dead ahead. The sun rose

over it, and set again half an hour later, as we rode in under the western lee of the long mountainous ridge—then rose again nearly an hour later. By that time we had dropped anchor in an unprotected cove that recalled the disaster to Darius's fleet. Two Greek policemen who had come with us stood at the top of the gangway and quizzed thoroughly those whom they let ashore. One woman pleaded to be allowed to take a boat just to the dock and back—and was glared at as if she had asked permission to commit a sacrilege. For no woman has ever set foot on the peninsula of Aghion Oros since it became a monasterial domain, something like a thousand years ago. Nor should we have been allowed to land but for our letter signed by the premier. For you must have a special visa for Mount Athos, even if you are so fortunate as to be of the male persuasion, and you are not likely to be warned of that fact beforehand.

When I started to show the letter again, to a picturesque figure standing at the extreme end of the little wooden wharf, the Greek policeman beside him snatched it as if I were overstepping his rights. For a moment it looked as if I might be the focus of an international misunderstanding. But the gaudy representative of the semi-independent near-republic of Aghion Oros withdrew gracefully, though without retiring, as much as to say to the man in uniform, I am a more important person than you, my haughty fellow, though it does happen that you have the right of way in this particular instance.

There have always been Turkish or Greek police on Mount Athos, mainly for matters concerning the outside world; but all other matters are in the hands of these *serdai* or *seimenis*, the special officials of the monasterial government. Like this man who more or less welcomed us, they wear a white ballet-dancer's skirt, Turkish brogans or slippers,

bright-red garters and sash, a short embroidered jacket, and are topped by a red liberty cap with a tassel over one ear. This particular relic of medieval days had a beard that was obviously not a priest's beard, though equal to many, and he carried a staff of office, as do his fellows at the land frontier, a little this side of what used to be Xerxes's canal.

The only port of Aghion Oros is a sad little hamlet called Daphne (incongruous name, you must admit, in a region where women are unknown); and it is a wise provision which permits no woman to land there. For if the fair sex ever caught sight of the establishment Daphne miscalls a hotel or sniffed even from afar the beds its ragged, bare-footed proprietor has to let, their opinion of the rival branch of the race would sink below zero. We took what the misanthropic scarecrow called a room, with two dogs' nests on legs in it; but, thank the gods of Olympus, we were never forced to sleep there.

As soon as we were in touch with the inevitable—by which I never mean unwelcome—"American" as interpreter, we learned that the next move was to climb for three or four hot, steep hours over the heavily wooded range above us to the headquarters of the bearded local authorities. For it seems that while the Greek police may permit you to land, if your sex is not against you and if they are feeling pleasant that morning, you can neither stay nor visit any of the monasteries until the monasterial government gives you leave. That government resides in Karyes, far over on the other side of the mountain ridge which tapers down both in height and width from the top of Athos mountain to almost nothing at the lowlands which made possible Xerxes's canal.

With us had come a man from Crete, on a visit to his brother, a monk at Karyes. He wore the full Cretan costume, a garb quite beyond my meager powers of descrip-

tion, and so nearly resembled a man from Mars that we had known he could not possibly understand us when we made some remark about him the evening before. What he did do was to reply at once, "Nice weather, eh?" He had lived in Keokuk, Iowa, and could still torture a little of what he fondly considered English. For that matter, there were a couple of Daphneans who had been in the United States and were only too eager to prove it linguistically.

"Keokuk," too, had to have permission from the bewhiskered powers before he could enter the monastery where his brother vegetated; and there are neither trains nor automobiles nor any other softening form of transportation on Mount Athos. True, a native layman (if any one can be a native in a land where a midwife would starve to death) accompanied us on a mule, of the masculine branch of its hybrid race, naturally; and we often had to wait for him. For the ancient cobbled road up through magnificent forests was better adapted to a man with thighs than to a mule with four feet and often no place to set them.

The scenery was paintable at every turn. The forest covering the entire hillside had huge trees equal to those of our Eastern mountains. Masses of flowers loomed up here and there in the greenery; birds sang and flitted among the dense branches; cicadas sawed wood. The delightful sound of running water was always in our ears; water to waste, and all that water stands for. It ran in a great stone channel to a monastery along the lower part of the trail; we could fill our canteens almost anywhere. The absolute antithesis of the rest of Greece. The sharp-pointed, ash-gray mass of Athos mountain bulked higher and higher, seemed to grow larger the farther we got from it; an imposing granite mass with no trees above its lower slopes and no inhabitants except about the base.

We were dripping wet long before we reached even the first of half a dozen summits, still far down on the western side. The artist, his modesty suddenly gone with the assurance that no female of any species had ever invaded the peninsula, pulled out his shirt, Chinese fashion, but found even that only slight relief. Half-way up the ridge, where the going would make a mountain goat puff, he gasped at the sight of automobile tracks in some sandy spots, where there was hardly room for a kiddy-car. For a moment he turned a baleful eye upon me and the opera-bouffe figure who had long since taken to calling us affectionately "Georgie" and "Harris," as if wondering whether we were playing the dastardly trick of making him walk unnecessarily up that dripping mountainside. Days afterward, among the odds and ends of gents' furnishings in Salonika, he found the answer to the puzzle: worn-out automobile tires are turned into sandals for mountaineers all through the Near East.

At length there appeared through the trees ahead splashes of Ægean blue, with hazy glimpses of the islands of Lemnos and Thasos, and, far below, Karyes (Greek for "walnut trees") to which we descended through thick, well-watered woods. The capital of the semi-independent monkish republic of Holy Mountain is a large, well-wooded town, with two immense monasteries and many smaller monk-houses, besides some usual town buildings. Huge churches peered forth amid such greenery as it is impossible even to imagine in Greece proper.

We reached the place about ten, that Sunday morning, and reported at once at the police station. Greek police are allowed only in Daphne and Karyes, and the necessary transit on the road between them. A lieutenant in the familiar grayish uniform, who complained that his health was so bad that he "must get back to his wife," was in charge, and spoke



A Cretan, who once lived in Keokuk, Iowa, walked
with us to Karyes



One of the "papal guard" of Aghion Oros, which we
call Mount Athos



Karyes, capital of the semi-independent monkish republic of Mount Athos



A courtyard of one of the many huge monasteries of Mount Athos

French. There were all the formalities of entering a new country, ending with a letter from the lieutenant to the government of the peninsula.

This, we gathered, held forth inside a courtyard beneath the aged tower of a quaint old church that was pointed out to us from the third-story police-station window. We must beard the bearded government in its den, alone, much as the lieutenant would have liked to show us the special courtesy due our letter of introduction. As we entered the courtyard we were met by two men in the old Greek (or is it the medieval Turkish?) costume, and informed that the reverend gentlemen who hand out passes were asleep—though it was then hardly eleven—and could under no circumstances be disturbed, as the lieutenant should have known. But we might come back at three o'clock.

We returned to the obliging lieutenant, pleading that we had no time to waste, as we wished to attend a famous ceremony at a distant monastery early the next morning. The lieutenant replied that the police "could not press matters too far"; but sent one of his underlings back with us. All in vain; or worse. The cop had no influence whatever, was, in fact, frankly bawled out by the haughty servants in ancient costumes. His coming seemed to be much like sending a representative of a Republican president to ask a favor of a governor of South Carolina. Evidently there was nothing to do but wait until three.

As the pope still has his Vatican guard, in fantastic old uniforms, so the monkish rulers of Aghion Oros dress their serving-men in medieval costume. Here at headquarters this was the same as that of the man on the wharf at Daphne, except that instead of the red skating cap over one ear, these had low round caps bearing the coat of arms of Aghion Oros, flanked by an A. and an O. One seemed back in the heyday of

Byzantium's power, here in the heart of the holy peninsula, as nowhere else in Greece, nowhere in all the Near East.

Yet Karyes was a sizable town, with all social degrees of beard-wearers wandering about, most of them smoking cigarettes and showing a moderate contentment with life. The laws of Aghion Oros are as strict as those of Zion City, Illinois. It is unlawful, for instance, and likely to result in one's being carried off by the A.O. police, to smoke in certain parts of the main street of the capital and only real town, "because holy buildings flank it." Yet the monks themselves were by no means abstainers from the weed. Greece allows Aghion Oros fourteen thousand drachmas' worth of imports free from tax or duty (daily, I suppose my informant meant), but charges the usual government rake-off on cigarettes and matches, "because the monks should not smoke."

The streets of the monkish town are charming, at least from the artist's point of view; but they are betridden only by bewhiskered brethren and a few male visitors. The main thoroughfare is largely lined with shops, all blank-faced now in their unpainted wooden shutters, in honor of the Sabbath. But down toward the end of it we discovered a medieval den-like restaurant, where we had a not at all bad lunch with plenty of meat and good wine—unpitched wine at that. Most of the monks on Mount Athos are vegetarians, but the few laymen can go to hell if they choose. Then we went on down to a field and stretched out for a much needed rest, but soon found the place swarming with ants that welcomed new territory to explore. There were gardens, olive orchards, vineyards here in the swiftly sloping outskirts, among which we impatiently endured the forced delay as best we could.

The Turk or Byzantine "hour" is still used in Karyes; and it is symbolical of the unimportance of time there that of a

dozen clocks we saw on the peninsula no two agreed in their misinformation. Toward what we guessed might be about three o'clock we drifted back into the main street. Its wares were still hidden behind weather-blackened unpainted wooden shutters; though one visitor got his monk uncle to open his bookshop for us. It recalled the den of Faust before the devil came to tempt him. The stock in trade seemed to be entirely ecclesiastical, and I doubt whether any of it had been written less than several centuries ago. The only map of the peninsula to be found was identical in geographical workmanship with those Columbus perused in laying his foolhardy plans to reach Cipango and Cathay. From another ancient document translated to us for a few lines, we learned that Aghion Oros is a "limited monarchy," hydra-headed; for the twenty deputies, one from each monastery, who legislate for the peninsula, elect each year from among themselves four "presidents."

When we reëntered the courtyard, these reverend gentlemen, who might open the doors of the twenty monasteries to us, if they chose, were asleep and could under no circumstances be disturbed. At four o'clock they were still asleep; also at half-past. The only man awake was one of their henchmen of the fancy costume, now in ordinary winter underclothing, washing the sleep out of his eyes and combing his thick dripping hair and beard. Both hair and beard were trimmed, as becomes mere servants of real monks, leaving not enough hirsute adornment to arouse envy in the breasts of their ordained superiors. We sat for an hour, listening to the constant running of water, until it became a wanton waste of something we had come, during our stay in arid Greece, to consider a precious substance. We sat another hour. Still in his undershirt, the older wearer of the A.O.

cap sprinkled down the wooden porch. His *négligé* was probably a deliberate slap at our unimportance, or in retaliation for our having left our coats in Daphne.

An easy life the "good old men" of Karyes lead beneath their grape arbors. There was a pretty little garden inside that monasterial courtyard, flanked on one side by a tower old in the Middle Ages. There were huge sunflowers, hollyhocks, hydrangeas, many small flowers, some in rusted oil-tins, sour plums—no sour grapes, however, as far as I am concerned. Give me action or give me death—old mossy flat stone roofs, some mended with rusted sheets of corrugated-iron, though most of the roofs of Karyes are covered with ordinary red tiles, long since turned a greenish deep maroon.

The artist sketched; I swore, left off that useless occupation to catch up on my notes; and still the time wore on. All kinds of whisker-growers began to drift in—all the castes of humanity, even as outside the monasterial estate, from haughty bishops to bearded bums—and drifted out again. There was a suggestion of the eunuch about that bewhiskered gentry dawdling in and out and all giving us coatless ones in the garden the once-over, a certain resemblance in manner to the ex-harem servants I had seen in Constantinople, rather drawn faces, in spite of a well-fed, well-slept aspect. Athos monks have the reputation all over Greece of being old rascals; they loaf through life themselves, hence see no harm, I suppose, in keeping every one loafing, waiting for a permit. Partly, the delay was probably to show their authority, partly because time means nothing to them, dreaming away their useless lives here on the sacred peninsula.

There was much beating of bells, of resounding boards; and amid this solemn hubbub several unusually haughty old graybeards in hair-pins came stalking in like diplomats to

an international conference. They disappeared into a room upstairs, opening upon the balcony above the courtyard. They were served coffee and cigarettes by the servants, now in their full ballet-dancer costume again. Enough coffee and cigarettes went in to supply a hundred presidents; and still no summons for us came.

To be sure, we did not look important, in our coatless, sweat-stained state. But walking had been hot, and we had expected to be back in Daphne for the night. In visiting Mount Athos, we know now, one should get some big noise in the religious world to write a letter of introduction. In fact, I received such a letter, from the Metropolitan of Salonika, about a week after leaving Mount Athos. Or better still, send such a letter ahead of you by several days, so the presidents can wake up and look at it before you arrive. Come all dressed up; put on lots of dog—which means mules, and pack-animals for your baggage, frock-coats and silk topper, especially suitable in July weather—if you like to travel in a shower-bath.

At last, about five in the afternoon, his Haughtiness stepped forth from the door we had been watching for hours, and one of his henchmen bowed low and handed him our request, as written by the police lieutenant, and the letter signed by the premier. Probably the latter did us more harm than good; the presidents very likely took all the more time, in order to show their independence and indifference to the Greek Government. The reverend president-in-chief was to all appearances a zealous listener to the dinner-bell. His great mattress of jet-black whiskers could not hide his fat jowls. He seemed hurt that we did not cringe beneath his gaze as he glanced up from reading the documents.

After staring at us for some time he finally vanished, reappearing long afterward with a carefully penned epistle

bearing the presidential signature, and disappeared again—without returning our letter signed by the premier. That letter had helped us over many a ticklish spot; there would be other ticklish spots in the three weeks of travel still ahead of us. In short, it was our most valued possession, at least on that side of the peninsula of Mount Athos. To the artist's horror and the lackey's terrified remonstrances, I started up the stairway after his pompous Holiness—and with the help of a man knowing a bit of French, whom the artist picked out of a mob that poured in from the street, I at length retrieved our priceless document.

CHAPTER XXI

ADVENTURES IN AGHION OROS

BY that time it was too late to go anywhere beyond the capital city. So we climbed to the nearer of two huge monasteries we had seen on our way down to Karyes, which turned out to be San Andreas, built in the form of a great square, a tremendous church occupying most of one side of its big inner courtyard. It was a solid stone structure, an immense mass of buildings, with tile roofs, nothing of wood, unlike Meteora, nor anything run-down about it. In fact, the well-kept monasteries of Mount Athos are all enormous, rather resembling the largest of summer hotels, the mightiest tourist establishments of Switzerland, for instance. Set in greenery such as we had almost forgotten, with many beautiful cypresses, San Andreas was surmounted by a dozen atrocious green or red sheet-iron domes, and these in turn by huge ornate crosses.

We walked into the yard, with the big gaudy church on the right hand and great stone barracks of monks on the three other sides. No one showed us the least attention. We berated ourselves for not having come here while waiting for our pass. We wandered along immense corridors lined by endless rows of cells, the doors all padlocked. We passed many growers of whiskers, who looked at us and did nothing. Somehow they appeared different from other Greek monks. At last we forced our attention upon a pair of them going about their own business along the great corridors, and

handed them the carefully written permit. They could not read it! Also their air was more friendly than that of Greek monks. I puzzled for a moment, until a "Niet" and a "Da" in the burst of eloquence from their lips told me they were Russians. San Andreas, it turned out, is one of several big Russian establishments on the holy peninsula. It was like an instantaneous transfer to Russia, the Russia of before the war, with fear of the czar's spies eliminated.

The score of monks who gathered about us were very friendly, and evidently sincerely so. But no wonder they had paid us no attention until we forced ourselves upon them, for we had arrived at the all-important hour of the evening meal. Several of them led us to the immense dining-room just as a horde of monks, their frugal supper finished, were pouring out like cattle from a stockyard pen. Some of them outrivaled the Greeks—nay, the best Bolsheviks—at raising whiskers. A cordial old fellow with one eye took charge of us. We had often thought the Greeks—though never the monks or priests—kindly; but these Russians outdid them hands down. The dining-room was larger than the largest auditorium of most American cities. We sat down at one end of a table as long as a bowling alley, on a wooden bench running the full length of it. There were a score or more of such endless bare tables, under the edges of which ran a narrow shelf where each brother keeps his knife, fork, and wooden spoon.

Our one-eyed host presently appeared and set before us with a charming bewhiskered smile two bowls of what the artist called barley soup, with some chunks of potato in it, two slabs of tough monasterial war bread only a shade or two this side of black, but which we attacked with the enthusiasm of famished wolves, and pewter mugs of some mysterious Russian beverage, strong as water. Our gullets were of course

prepared for the inevitable pitch-ruined wine, but strange to say . . . well, the artist classified it as rather inferior and very weak vinegar and as our host turned his head he dumped his mugful back into the huge pewter tankard, so that when the monk looked around again he seemed to see my double-faced companion draining the big mug to the bottom with great gusto. But wickedness is its own reward, *n'est-ce pas?* In spite of almost tearful remonstrances the kind-hearted cenobite, benevolence fairly spurting from the single window of his simple soul, filled the base wretch's mug to the brim again, and obliged him to repeat the deception, while I, honest fellow, drank only some of my first helping and so escaped that dreadful double potion.

Every square foot of the walls of that immense church-like hall was covered with gay if not artistic pictures—no statues, of course, only flat surfaces. Paintings on the walls themselves, that is, with no other frames than those painted about them. There seemed to be no dominating group or order in the arrangement of the huge figures; more or less of a hodge-podge of religious characters, the most frequently exploited being elderly gents with astonishingly long beards in lieu of clothing. There was Adam in his old age, for instance, much larger than during his lifetime, if I have read my Bible intelligently, and as naked as the day he met Eve, except for a superb flow of iron-gray whiskers amply protecting his modesty—at last we knew the reason for the Near East churchman's abhorrence of the barber. In the light of the setting sun the colors of the picture-hidden walls, viewed as a whole, were pleasing; certainly the whole setting was fantastic, an incredible contrast to our own modern and matter-of-fact land.

Our appetites blunted, he of the missing eye led us to our room, far away along the third-floor guest corridor, a room

superior to most hotel chambers in the Near East—until we sat down on the gorgeous stone-hard beds. Nor was that all, as we were presently to discover. But there was a magnificent view out our barred window, and the babble of running water somewhere far below. Many photographs of the late czar and his family, some of them autographed, and scores of pictures of Russians of all classes hung in single frames along this third-floor corridor, giving it a resemblance to a homesick college boy's room.

Somehow we found our way back again to the ground, and the artist sat down on a pile of wood in an obscure corner of the courtyard. But while the grass-grown, flagstoned square was pretty, in a way, the ensemble irked my companion's soul from the artistic point of view. He climbed to the top of a stone fence outside the main doorway, from which there was a magnificent view of Athos mountain in the setting sun, and sketched until twilight. The sharp-pointed, ash-gray granite mass of the mountain, streaking down into the dense forest in which it sits, was a beautiful contrast to the deep green of the rest of the peninsula and the deep blue of the sea. Two islands, one so hazy that only its form could be made out, broke the Ægean; the nearer one Thasos, the dim one Samothraki, both Greek again now.

From outside, the vast monastery bulked into the evening sky huger than ever. I strolled away along a narrow, cobble-paved old road. There were houses across the wooded valley below me; beautiful little domes of mossy stone scattered about the landscape. There were woodsy retreats, old men, some youths, noisy as in the modern world, but never the voice of a woman or a girl; at best only the voices of boys of fifteen or so; many delightful lovers' lanes but no lovers. Dilapidated buildings in the fields; gardens, vineyards, grape arbors (the grapes, alas, still just a bit too green), ram-

shackle old country-home-like places housing a few aged monks. Rows of rounded beehives made of mud and sticks and covered with bark or dry leaves; there should be plenty of honey in the vegetation of Mount Athos. Some farming, and much loafing; men ranging all the way from the rich and influential to the ragged and slinking, as everywhere, except that here they were all in long black gowns, unsheared hair and whiskers, beneath black top-hats without rims. Wandering along those woodsy cobbled roads, no vehicles, no women, no children, induced a contented mood. One wished one never had to hurry again, that one could be as contented with doing nothing as a razorless monk, only do enough to escape ennui—but for Americans would that not be rather constant doing for even the laziest of us?

With complete sunset came a jangling of bells as discordant as the green and red domes of the monastery, with their huge golden crosses. Only by luck did I escape being shut out of the establishment for the night—or would the one-eyed saint have rescued me? It might have been better so, had I but known it. A languid monk was closing the immense outer doors just as I squeezed through the last crack between them. From another door a hooded monk stepped out with a plank in his arms, and beat this sonorously with a wooden mallet as he walked slowly around the great square. The booming sound reëchoed from the four high walls about us. As he reëntered the door from which he had come, a huge bell of inspiring tonality thundered from the garish church tower above. After about twenty solemn notes had echoed through the hills, a perfect fury of sound burst forth from a dozen or more bells clanging in a sort of crude rhythm. Then presently the ringing ceased so suddenly that the silence was nerve-shocking.

About the time the furious ringing ended, our host beckoned to us to follow him. First we had tea with him in his

own cell. Far from the conventional monk's cell it was, with its silver samovars, its Russian photographs, its furniture sufficient to stock a dealer in Near East antiquities. Or was this the guest parlor? The one-eyed one had brought in a priest who spoke French, and we exchanged the first and last thoughts, except by gestures, of all our stay. Then he inveigled us toward the great church. We pointed to our grimy clothing, our lack of coats. He laughed, and led us gently on into the immense structure. Evidently shirt sleeves do not bother Russians as they do Greeks.

No wonder it was quite all right to go to church without coats and with as conspicuous a hole in one's trousers as the artist chanced just then to be harboring. For with the exception of two big candles at the sides of a great golden screen guarding the holy of holies there was no light whatever. No trousers at all would have been perfectly proper so far as appearances were concerned; besides, there were no women to be shocked.

The diminutive cyclops conducted us to seats against the wall well up in front, a transverse wall, evidently, for we could feel rather than see another vast open space behind us. The seats were about six inches wide and so high from the floor that any man under six feet could swing his feet to and fro; seats evidently designed to prevent monks from falling asleep during the two-hour service. The narrow arms of those chairs, or stalls, were on a level with our armpits. Shortly after we had wriggled ourselves into something like a comfortable position, the great bell overhead tolled a few times and hundreds of monks filed in, glided in like black ghosts, without a sound, seemed to float into the vast dim church like phantoms. All subsided into chairs, or stalls, set into the walls; and presently the ghostly figures were swallowed up in deep shadows, had become invisible.

All the monasteries on Mount Athos, I understood, have a two-hour service every evening; and an impressive service this one was, indeed. It began with two monks trying to sing each other down. Then two acolytes came forth from a door in the great golden screen up front and walked slowly around each side of the church, swinging censers. From somewhere a priest appeared and, standing before the screen, intoned a litany; and in response a choir hidden in some recess sang as nearly heavenly music as it has ever been my privilege to hear. Through it all rang a bass voice which any opera star might have envied. I have often heard Chaliapin, and I can assure you he is not the equal in voice of that unknown fellow-countryman of his who chooses to conceal his identity in a black gown and hide his light under a bushel in this recess of isolated, womanless Aghion Oros.

But presently he gave way to more commonplace voices. We had put in a hard day. It became worse than painful holding ourselves erect in our six-inch seats, supporting ourselves by our aching elbows and the tips of our sore toes. Besides, somehow the service, mysterious and awesome as it was, seemed sterile without women, or at least without some congregation except the monks, invisible in their dark corners. We tiptoed out, thinking to escape our solicitous host. But the good old man was waiting for us at the entrance. He led us again to his own room, if so it was, once more made us tea and from some hidden recess brought forth some ancient-Greek toast, hard as the marble of the Parthenon. Not a word was spoken, yet we held a spirited conversation by means of signs. Finally he escorted us to our bedroom, lighted our smoky little lamp, and bowed good night to us as he backed out into the unlighted corridor.

We had looked forward to the sleep of that summer; but evidently visitors from all over the world come to these mon-

asteries; and each one seems to leave behind any surplus vermin he can spare for the chastening of the spirits of his fellow-men. The beds looked clean, if hard; but never were looks more deceiving. Some invisible form of torture fell upon us the instant we lay down. Were they sand-flies, fleas, or still more loathsome creatures? I do not know to this day. Certainly it appeared that we were new and interesting objects of exploration to all the clans and tribes of whatever species inhabit the monastery beds of Mount Athos. They were like a constant pricking with innumerable red-hot needles, like roasting over an invisible fire. All night long we twisted and turned, and used language out of all keeping with monasterial life.

Perhaps bugs are a part of the training in endurance, of chastising the flesh to monasterial contrition, like a hair shirt or the arctic garments and hair in which the monks of the Eastern Church attain to Nirvana. Furthermore, we were serenaded all night by thousands of frogs, each equipped with a voice similar in volume to a night-watchman's noise-makers in China. I heard or saw no dogs on all Mount Athos; but roosters (can it be that there are ladies of the species also?) were seldom silent; and myriads of starved cats, who evidently did not live up to the monasterial rule of celibacy, added the final agony. Never once did I, for one, really fall asleep.

Yet there was no escape until dawn, for the immense doors would be closed even if we could find our way to them. We crawled from our infested stony beds at the first peep of daybreak, glad indeed to escape to the open, where bugs are at least less personal. Fortunately the great monastery gates were already open and the way free to the mountain.

To climb and descend that cobbled trail over the backbone

of Mount Athos, breakfastless after the frugal supper of the preceding evening, without falling asleep on our feet was as difficult as it had been to leave without having thanked our kindly, bug-impervious, one-eyed host. But at least it was pleasanter walking in the early morning; also it was not so much of a climb as from sea-level the hot forenoon before, since Karyes is only half-way down to the Ægean. Rushing waters and dense forests added to our recovery; sunrise found us passing, still breakfastless, over the top of the ridge, and three hours' walk brought us to the next retreat, Siro Potam.

Our pass was inspected with a great deal of solemnity before we were permitted to enter through stupendous doors ten feet high and at least six inches thick, closely studded with huge nails and sheathed on the back with iron. Behind one of the doors stood a great club bristling with spikes. In ancient times, at least, that monastery was not merely a place for peaceful meditation.

There was a cigarette shop also just inside the outer entrance; and that familiar relic of the past, the beating on a board while carrying it about, so much more romantic than a bell, was summoning the inmates to the next round of their religious duties. While the immense establishment was more commonplace than artistic, there were some quaint, age-tinted corners. The courtyard, flanked by what might have been taken for the backs of medieval tenements, so unmodern were the three-story rows of structures forming a wall around it, with its six-story tower holding a curious old clock more medieval than that of Nuremberg and a queer kiosk in its center, was worth coming to see, even if artistic souls sniff at it.

But food was uppermost in our thoughts. Apprentice

monks led us to a kind of rest-room in the second story, bare except for a rug-covered Turkish divan. Yet all we could get for the inner man was a tiny cup of black coffee each, not even a chunk of war bread, though we already had a dozen stiff miles in our legs. The hospitality of Mount Athos monasteries is a byword; yet they probably did not dream that any one could want to break his fast so early—it was still barely nine o'clock in the morning. We took our leave with what courtesy we could muster and plodded on along a now red-hot and always stony pathway to the next home of bearded—and perhaps breaded—brethren.

This establishment of San Pandalermo (or was it Pandemonium? We had to trust to our ears rather than to our eyes as to the names on Mount Athos) was apparently quite up-to-date as monasteries go. The groups of buildings, descending in layers to the seashore, showed more signs of age than San Andreas, yet they had by no means reached the ramshackle stage. There were almost successful attempts at landscape gardening, aided and abetted by magnificent oleanders at some time planted in the right places by some artistic monk.

It goes without saying that we were famished. An American appetite is more than a nuisance anywhere in Greece, at least during the first half of the day, and doubly so in monasterial territory. Services were going on in some of the churches tucked away among the series of huge buildings. Much droning of litanies reached our weary ears. We drifted into the common dining-room, opening directly upon the highest of several large courtyards. It was a replica of the tremendous room in which we had dined—to stretch the word to its utmost—the evening before, dim as twilight with the little sunshine that filtered through the door and the big stained-glass windows at the back, its walls covered with bearded paintings identical with those of San Andreas.

Servant monks were setting the immense tables, bare wooden tables with a raised rim about the edge and flanked by hard wooden benches. Russians again, evidently, for they wore over their black fez a kind of black veil, which is not Greek.

One of the servant monks was distributing small apples, leaving four or five at each place. I caught the artist trying to snatch one, then saw his honest conscience drive his hand away empty, though apparently none of the monks had seen him. Later one of them gave us a couple of apples each, but they were anything but filling, mere caricatures of real American apples.

I am more enthusiastic about Greek monastery bread than the artist, accustomed to the denaturized stuff of our metropolitan area. Yet it was he who ventured to a window at one side of the mammoth dining-room, where chunks of it were being loaded into baskets. He looked into some sort of opening, to be greeted by a veritable Santa Claus of a monk, who never ceased to grin at him as he operated with a three-foot knife upon enormous loaves, cutting them into table-sized pieces. The knife had a wooden handle, which he rested on a shoulder, while he drew the blade across the loaf until he reached the end of it, then turned it over and cut off the slices—no, not slices, slabs. The artist pointed and held up two fingers. Santa's grin expanded; it verged on the bursting point when the starving artist dropped two ragged bills into his hand, and left hastily for fear of being embraced. Not, however, until he had laid hands upon two slabs of bread.

Meantime I had disappeared, but showed up presently carrying a large bowl of soup, won in an immense medieval kitchen by the same effective form of pantomime. Behind me came a monk with an equally large bowl of—sour cabbage soup with a second-hand flavor, the artist styled it. Certainly

it tasted as if it had been several times warmed over. My finnickier companion had not yet reached the stage of starvation which made this mess welcome; he resigned the moment he caught his first whiff of it. Personally, I have had too much experience with strange concoctions to be balked by mere delicacy of stomach, and when the artist's back was turned I ate his share in addition to my own.

Luckily, the urge to paint seems to be unaffected by such material matters as hunger, thirst, or drooping eyelids. The conglomerate mass of buildings about us, of no particular style, painted in various bright colors, brought forth the artist's sketch-book. Marvelous oleanders smiled from every corner; in the bright sunlight everything sparkled; there was nothing formal; the buildings just seemed to have happened. Bearded brethren strolled up and watched him over a shoulder. Then a gentle voice spoke to us in English, and we looked up to find above us a face that would have served the medieval painters of Christ admirably as a model.

The æsthetic young monk who had addressed us was obviously an unusually cultured and well-educated man. We were sorry that courtesy forbade our asking more of his history than he chose to tell, and that, unfortunately, was little. Men go to monasteries to forget—and to be forgotten; and this man had quite evidently been some one before the Russian debacle. Thousands of Russians out of luck have no choice but to go "on the beach" or come to Aghion Oros and grow whiskers.

San Pandalermo was founded about 1160, and is the only Russian monastery on Mount Athos. We had fancied San Andreas, quite as large and not so nearly run-down, one; but the inmates of this establishment on the edge of the sea disabused us, rather scornfully, we thought, for men of their calling. No, San Andreas is merely a skiti, said he of

the Christ-like face—though, on closer inspection, without a beard he would have had too weak a chin to fit perfectly our conventional visualization of Jesus. There are seventeen Greek, one Serbian, one Bulgarian, and this Russian monastery in Aghion Oros. There is a big establishment of Rumanian monks, too, but their place also is only a skiti. Some even very large collections of monks do not rank as monasteries, because, being later comers, they have no political power, do not have the voting privilege—that is, the right to send a representative to Karyes—but must, at least in theory, rent their land from some real monastery, with a charter, pretend to belong to another group, as some organizations in the business world nominally work under the charter or incorporation of another.

Thus there are twenty real monasteries on the peninsula; and about eight thousand monks. The Greek Government cannot order them out there, hence the number, far from decreasing, has been increased by many of those driven from the establishments in Greece proper, and from neighboring countries. About half the monasteries are kinovia, or communal; in the others, inmates may still hold individual property. In the kinovia, such as Pandalermo, all inmates, even the abbot, eat in common, and are vegetarians. There is no withdrawing from those, apparently, except by frank desertion, leaving all behind. In the other type the monks each own their share of the establishment separately and eat what they like, or at least whatever they can get. In most of these a monk can leave and take his property with him, after paying his expenses, apparently whenever the spirit moves him. Some of these freer monks keep shops, some run farms, some act as servants for the others; most of them do nothing except “services.”

In the kinovia a man must have the prior's permission

to leave the establishment even for an hour; and as the prior has in most cases lived beyond the desires of the flesh, it is not easy to get his consent. San Pandalermo contained five hundred and thirty monks, of all social classes, as we could not but note when they filed into the great dining-room soon after our cicerone asked our indulgence for taking temporary leave of us. One of the monks, standing on a raised dais below the stained-glass windows at the back of the immense hall, read the Bible in a resonant voice, all through the meal. We gathered that there was some rule against inviting us inside. Then the abbot, in his fanciest garb, came out with stately tread, several higher monks flanking him and two low fellows holding up the tail of his gay gown, the hundreds of others pouring forth two by two behind him.

The prior's successor is elected, partly by lot, during his predecessor's life, according to the English-speaking monk. Here a man must have no private property; and he may remain a novice any number of years, depending on the whim (he of the Christ-like face said "opinion") of the abbot. He himself had been three years a novice, he mentioned. The monks try the soul of a new man with work below his station and with other forms of English boarding-school fagging, we gathered; but on the whole, all the inmates gradually settle down into their natural respective castes; hence they range from hairy beggars to abbots in fancy gowns. Our attendant spoke sadly of his native land, saying the Bolsheviks had killed nearly all monasterial life in Russia, which he seemed to consider a misfortune. Strange that these communist monks should hate the communist Bolsheviks at home.

"We have six hours of services together daily, and many devotions by ourselves. Studying? No, there is so much spiritual life that there is little time left for the merely intellectual." He spoke as if the latter were of slight importance



A cross-section of the common dining-room of a great Russian monastery of Mount Athos



Two of the five hundred and thirty Russian monks in a single monastery of
Mount Athos

compared with the former, which means chiefly the droning of endless services. Besides the two main divisions of monasteries there are the *idiorithma*, or irregulars, which have no fixed rules; and finally, fanatic monks who live all alone in caves, become little more than insane wild beasts.

He of the striking face sent us back to Daphne in a boat rowed by a peasant-looking fellow in monk's garb, who handled the craft clumsily, though sturdily. Some who have never seen the sea, or even a boat, before they come to Mount Athos, become good boatmen. This former *mujik* stopped along the way to peer far down into the blue waters, beneath the cardboard vizor that shaded his eyes, until he had located and pulled to the surface his lobster pots—without any luck.

Back at Daphne I went for a swim, but was warned of a "big fish," by the assembled and startled community. Washing is evidently unpopular on womanless Mount Athos; and fear of a big fish makes as good an excuse as any. Of our attempt to take a siesta on the alleged beds we had rented the morning before, pray let as little be said as possible. There were other things we might have seen and done in Aghion Oros. But the steamer which carried us away that afternoon was the only one, they said, for a week or ten days; and I for one did not hanker after ten days of Mount Athos's food and beds. The great peak seemed again to rise higher and higher as we left it behind. One monastery clung well up the side of the great gray granite mass, streaked here and there part-way up with the dense unbroken greenery in which it sits. We caught glimpses of other famous establishments—*Simonos Petras*, *Gregorios*, *Dyonisios*, *Aghios Pavlos*, *Nea Skiti*, the last a hundred small houses far up the cliffs. But for the mere superficial layman visitor, these probably have little to offer beyond what we had already seen—and suffered.

There is a little white chapel on the tiptop of the mountain; but it is visited only once a year. On August 15, the Virgin Mary's birthday, when Greek pilgrims climb to nearly all the high places in the country, this tiny church on the very tip of that vast stone pyramid becomes the focus of attention of all the brethren of Aghion Oros, as well as of many pious Greek visitors, and there is a pilgrimage to it from all the monasteries of the peninsula. How the elderly members survive the trip, in their voluminous black robes just clearing the ground, to say nothing of the discomforts of long hair and beards and the blazing sunshine, is another mystery of the Near East.

We left Mount Athos with the same impression we had carried away from the "hanging" monasteries—that at least celibacy is a virtue in a land where there are far too many people already, and where no other form of birth-control seems to be practised. That while the monks lead a life just about as useful as the safety-razor and silk-stockings concession for the peninsula would be to an energetic salesman, considered merely as old men's homes perhaps Greek monasteries justify their existence. Furthermore, that having seen enough ecclesiastics of the barber-abhorring Eastern Church to furnish hair mattresses for all Christendom, we should be quite willing to eliminate from our itinerary any more monasteries we ran across. Nor did we see any reason to complain because the health authorities insisted on an inspection when we arrived back in Salonika.

CHAPTER XXII

MEANDERING THE PELOPONNESUS

WHAT shall I say of many famous old places of Hellas, since I have not the ability to tell glibly of what I have not seen? But I am no archæologist; and battle-fields give me as little thrill as do long descriptions of battles, be they ancient Grecian shindigs or modern prize-fights. If I can be there, well and good; otherwise I am perfectly satisfied merely to know who won. Archæologically, at least, the artist was with me; nor, come to think of it, did he sniff the air of bygone arenas with any martial manner. All of which is, I suppose, the main reason why we missed many a spot in Greece made infamous by some great throat-cutting in ages past. Will you believe me when I say that not only did I not run from Marathon to Athens, but that I did not so much as visit that famous mound at all? Yet a medieval motor-bus leaves Athens for Marathon every afternoon, returning in the morning; and I have heard that the lodging this forces upon one may cause him to make that famous run in spite of good resolutions.

But why go on? Merely to mention the famous places I did not see, even without saying any of the things I do not know about them, would fill a book; and this one is quite full enough already. Yet what would a journey to Greece be without a tour of the Peloponnesus? Behold us, then, bright and early on the penultimate Friday of July, bouncing by

taxi to the Peloponnesus station (which is quite other than that at which the government railway from Paris, Salonika, and way-stations sets you down) and just about the time the irrepressible sun of Athens takes up its daily black-jacking of any head that peers forth from the shade, we might have been seen seating ourselves in—or rather, on—third-class seats of the privately owned narrow-gauge line which encircles Morea, that mulberry-leaf-shaped southern peninsula which the ancients called the Peloponnesus.

Why third? Well, for one thing, in order to keep my companion reminded that he was only an artist after all; sometimes, imperceptibly led on by the low rate of exchange and prices so out of keeping with those at home, he squandered money as if he were a plumber or a bricklayer. Moreover, for the few drawbacks of riding third there are many advantages, of which the difference in price is the slightest.

An excellent automobile road sets out from Athens to Morea via the Sacred Way and Eleusis, notable now for its factory chimneys belching black smoke. For there the pitch that is used for making porous plasters, for the ruination of Greek wine, and other forms of torture, is refined. The railroad, however, makes a wide circuit about the Sacred Way; goes on through ancient Megara, then runs beside the bluest sea any artist could paint, often along cliffs so close to it that the least false twist of the wrist on the part of the engineer at the steering-wheel . . . nay, I am dozing, unused to early rising, or thinking of the highway directly below us, at the sheer foot of barren cliffs that climb high into the molten gold above.

At length the Canal of Corinth, which makes the Peloponnesus also an island. A deep, sheer-sided ditch of Ægean-blue water, its all but perpendicular walls spaded mainly in yellow composite or sandstone. Only one steamer worthy the

name can pass through at a time, though there are a couple of side-tracks, in the shape of deeper cuts in the side walls, into which harassed boats can crowd in times of stress. From the railway the canal is not seen until you are right upon it; and just beyond comes modern Corinth, quite a city, though less so than before it recently became the plaything of earthquakes. But we could see that on the way back, as well as the bare walled mountaintop of Acro-Corinth, which the train rounded as we pushed on toward Mycenæ.

The country was rather bare, it is true. Yet the fact remains that if he were as completely the artist as he pretends, my companion would have given his attention exclusively to the landscape, and not partly to the running of the train. But then, the manipulation of a Greek train is a rite likely to attract the attention of even the most concentrated of untraveled Americans. It takes something like half a dozen men to get the most diminutive one under way. The station-master must signal his assistant to ring a bell on the platform; whereupon the conductor, with a graceful flourish, pulls from an inside breast pocket a little horn, and toots it with all the volume and pleasure of a youngster on Christmas morning. The conductor's assistant blows a similar instrument, and by that time the engineer is usually conscious that there is a conspiracy under way to cause the train to move onward. As soon as this very original idea is clear to him he shows himself highly pleased, particularly as it gives him another chance to pull the whistle-cord, loosening the most raucous, hellish, blood-curdling noise ever emitted by human invention.

Finally, the knight of the throttle gets his miniature engine going, his cute little train tagging along behind, like something Santa Claus brought, long ago. But you cannot expect him to be brave enough to run over a flock of turkeys,

especially when the owner is a lady of imposing girth who stands by brandishing a big stick. There are goats and pigs to be shooed off, too, and besides these natural obstacles there are the unnatural ones of a station, for some unknown reason, every few miles.

Nor is it merely the engine-driver and his coal-shoveling assistant who toil while the toy train rattles onward. The examination of tickets is a solemn ceremony that must be gone through often enough to prevent any drowsy individual from getting a slight nap, even if there are not stations enough for that purpose. It takes three or four men in a row, or in skirmish formation on both sides of the coaches, to audit the rights of passengers to ride on a Greek train. The leader, in a three-stripe cap and sleeves, as a sign of high rank, and dressed so nearly like a Gilbert-and-Sullivan Count of Greece or Duke of Athens that one suspects he pays the railway company for the privilege of holding his job, enters the car, or, more likely, comes clambering along the running-board and climbs into the compartment, rapping viciously on the back of your wooden seat, in order to arouse any one who by some marvel may have dozed off since the last visitation.

More likely still, he is preceded by a man of lower rank whose duty it is to do the rapping and prepare the passengers to show suitable respect to the great personage, as police warn spectators before a royal procession. In that case the chief visitor receives the tickets from this henchman, punches them, and hands them back through the same medium, no doubt because the social gulf between him of the three stripes and a mere passenger warrants an intermediary. The second man, in two stripes, sometimes also carries a punch—the mortality in punches is naturally high—and it is he who receives the money if the passenger has no ticket, in which

case the traveler must pay a fifty-percent increase over the regular rates for the inefficiency or love of café loafing of the station-master at his point of departure. Perhaps the conductor himself is so high in the social scale that it is beneath his dignity to handle filthy lucre—which is the only kind of lucre current in the Greece of to-day—or it may be that the second man performs this function in order that by some strange mistake the money shall not get into the wrong pocket of the leader of the expedition.

Close behind this initial pair comes a man in one stripe, and behind him a man with none, who also carries a spare punch, like an African gun-bearer, to be used if the other two are worn out before the sortie is over. Or it may be that it is brought along as a weapon, in case the receiver of filthy lucre is assaulted by an irate passenger. The duties of the third man are obscure. He may be a kind of body-guard to the great man in generalissimo uniform, whom all treat with great deference. At any rate, he watches every movement of the conductor with cat-like vigilance.

When this whole crowd suddenly appears at the compartment window, a nervous man might fancy a group of bandits had swooped down upon him from the bare hills above—yet I for one am perfectly peaceful in giving up my ticket, if I have and can afford one. Nor is it any wonder if, suddenly awakened out of the nearest approach to a sound sleep in weeks, a man with a troubled conscience or a police record (such as incarceration as a spy in his home town) should for an instant contemplate flight by the opposite door. Horrible thought; for only an active man, springing unexpectedly to the ground from a Greek train in *toute vitesse*, could be sure of not being at least thrown to his knees by the impact with meandering earth.

But the likelihood of escape is usually slight, since the

gang commonly descends upon the opposite windows at the same time. On the whole I take it that the man on the off side is there to keep the passenger from attacking the conductor, while the man behind the extra punch-carrier is there to keep the conductor from attacking the passenger, though I admit I have no proof of either conclusion. But why ponder the subject longer? I am sorry I ever brought it up. Extreme mental exertion always did leave me groggy; and why can't we keep things down to the average man's intelligence, we unmitigated highbrows? One of the thousand and one Greek-Americans we met that summer told us that one ticket-examiner would be too lazy to do all the work, even if the company could trust him alone; but I refuse to be baited into further discussion. Anyhow, at the end of a short run your ticket is as full of holes as that of a commuter at the end of the month.

One fine thing about third-class travel in Greece is that the floors of the cars usually have cracks or holes worn in them, through which you may watch the road-bed beneath passing at ten, twelve, sometimes almost fifteen miles an hour, which is a relief from constantly watching the scenery from either window. Here, too, one may see the real, picturesque life of Greece, as in the bosom of its homes. The amazing good nature and skill with which a peasant stows his worldly goods away in the racks above and under and about the hard wooden seats is a study in character. The artist's note-book mentions fish, turkeys, hens, pigeons, pigs, melons, wine, water-bottles, lunch, and many odds and ends of clothing, in the single case of our car that day; and these stowed, the family must be taken care of next. The children are always eating, though they almost always look anemic and underfed.

When the train comes to a crawl in climbing any sugges-



The lion's gate at Mycenae



Nauplia, and the island home of Greece's official executioner, who is himself a convict

tion of a grade, boys run alongside begging discarded newspapers, not so much because of the news they may possibly be able to read as because, next to money, wrapping paper is the scarcest thing in Greece. Newspapers nearly always take the place of it. Even grapes are wrapped in a newspaper cornucopia—and the wise man eats them quickly, for Greek grapes are juicy and Greek newspaper packages of delicate build, as the sometimes absent-minded artist probably remembers to this day.

In addition to the murdered-female shrieks of the toy engine, the horns, bells, whistles at every stop and as often as possible between them, and all the other Turkish atrocities of sound, there is the incessant rattling of beads, as sure as there are males on board. The hawkers of fruit and the like at every station of size, ranging from boys of the toddling age up to late manhood, add to the uproar, though they seldom invade the carriages. And to top off, unless you know the Greek alphabet you must make a wild guess at the name of your station, or get off at the wrong one, or fail to get off at the right one. True, the station names are called by the guard, by the assistant station-masters, and by several lower forms of railroad humanity. But as all these are as unintelligible as our subway guards, lucky is the man whose destination is at the end of the line.

Ours was not, that first stop in the Peloponnesus; hence we had to keep both eyes and ears peeled for something resembling Mycenæ. The ruins there were so old in Cæsar's day that Roman guide-books marveled at their antiquity. That afternoon the justly famous lion's gate was beautified by the artist in the double, and well-nigh impossible, act of attempting to paint it and keep out of the deadly Grecian sunshine at the same time. Ours was the only activity there, except the wind; we the only signs of living humanity.

Agamemnon's grave (if archæologists have guessed aright as to the erstwhile occupant of the largest of several huge circular pits, faced with upright stone slabs), into the still partly vaulted top of which I all but lost a companion, is an interesting form of sepulcher; and there are several others like it at Mycenæ. But I confess that a nap in the shady breeze was more to the point that afternoon. Besides, why strive to steal the poor archæologists' thunder, when we more fortunate chaps have so much more to see and report?

Tiryns, a few miles farther on, is so important that a German has written several heavy tomes on it. To us simple fellows it was merely a heap of stones and earth, containing a few tunnels with painted inside walls and a crumbling outside stone one, like scores of others all over Greece. We admit that it is ourselves rather than Tiryns which made that stop hardly worth while. You'd think an artist would have imagination enough to reconstruct the past and get a thrill out of seeing such relics; yet he was really more disappointed than I at the fallen remnants of a mighty civilization. Perhaps we were skyscraper-minded and capable of being thrilled only by whole buildings still standing, such as the Parthenon or the Temple of Theseus; and the great majority of the ancient monuments of Greece are mere patches of scattered stones.

At Argos, where a branch goes down to the sea at Nauplia, a score or more of soldiers under bayonet guard were tied together in twos by strings attached to their wrists; harmless-looking fellows, with nothing so evident in their faces as an ardent longing to have their conscript years over and return to their homes. Yet by the attitude of their guards you might have thought them Bolsheviks whose revolution had just been nipped in the bud, or partizans of wicked Pangalos—the air was just then full of an attempt at escape

by the ex-dictator from his castle prison in Crete. They turned out to be merely A W O L's, due for three or four months' imprisonment at Nauplia.

The great fortress-topped hill behind Argos, with a striking white monastery half-way up it, was a sight to behold; the town itself was flat, dusty, and uninteresting. The approach, across the rich plains of Argos, to the sea at Nauplia, first capital of modern Greece, was made picturesque by its two unequal, medieval-fortress-crowned hills. We were met by a French-speaking, Constantinople-born Greek; but the landlord of the hotel he graces speaks English and had perspicacity enough to recognize that his dinners are too high-priced for such as we. The cheaper restaurant to which he directed us without a suggestion of pique was owned by a man who had kept a candy store in Seattle and still spoke a little Seattlese. His son had once had the gumption to spend fifty thousand drachmas and nearly a year trying to get into the United States by way of Cuba, only to be shipped home again. He gazed at us, while we ate, as he might have at people from equally unattainable Mars, now and then throwing in a remark in labored Spanish.

Nauplia is cleaner and more pleasing than the average small Grecian city; in fact, rumor has it, perhaps not without reason, the cleanest town in Greece. One mosque is now a movie, another a warehouse, both delightful in their red-brown domes. There are music and outdoor motion pictures and cold drinks along the water-front in the evening, with a parade thrown in of all that Nauplia has to offer in human form. By day that same water-front is a dreary expanse of iron tables and chairs, piled in heaps, blistering in the sun, nets of fishermen drying across them. During the morning scores of people, especially girls and women, each carrying a towel, climb over the low gap between Nauplia's two hills

to its splendid beach, a most unusual Greek performance. Evidently the "big fish" does not infest this particular spot.

The artist, wise man, abhors climbing to high places; I seem unable to break myself of the useless habit. It was a hot ascent to the abandoned fortress on Palamidi, 705 feet above the beach at its foot, 857 steps of stone (Baedeker counted them, not I). Built by the Venetians and long the principal prison of Greece, this fortress is one of the most horrible and one of the most wonderful prisons in the world. Vaulted dungeons with rotting wooden floors raised well above the ground suggested generations of suffering and brutality; yet all about is a marvelous view of mountains and sea, the great plain of Argos on one side and the Ægean on the other. Nauplia, clustered on three sides of Palamidi, its beautiful bay inclosed by yellow-brown mountain ranges, fills the vista sheer below.

To-day, some sheep graze up there; a few soldiers seem to be stationed in one of the immense rock-clinging buildings. But there are no prisoners now; room for thousands but no water. The present place of incarceration is on Itch-Kelah, the lower hill, also crowned by an ancient fortress. There prisoners seem to be free to do much as they like, so long as they do not attempt to go down the hill.

Even from there the view is remarkable. A new refugee town gleams across the bay; roads climb away over the mountains on both sides of it, surely a never-ceasing tantalization to prisoners; and down in the more than vivid-blue Ægean, a champion baseball throw from the table-lined water-front, sits the executioner's island, like the castle of Chillon. Until the guillotine was recently abolished in Greece, the prisoner-executioner lived on this tiny island, completely covered with an ancient fortress, with a rowboat to bring him ashore but no right to go farther. He had been con-

demned to death himself, but accepted, for the privilege of living, the task of doing away with his fellows. Some super-artist, some modern Homer would fit better into that inimitable handful of earth, that castle sitting on the blue sea.

It seems it has always been hard to get executioners from among the Greeks. No less an authority than Hans Christian Andersen affirms that the first execution after Greece regained her nationality a century ago and imported King Otho, was of a notorious robber, for whom an executioner had been imported from Malta; and for two hours the condemned man fought him before he received his death-blow. Through it all the German soldiers surrounding the scene merely guarded against the prisoner's escape, even as they had been ordered; gave the struggling executioner no help; and tradition has it that the Maltese was murdered soon afterward.

CHAPTER XXIII

DOWN TO SPARTA

BACK to Argos, to change trains, for a hot, hard, crowded ride over bone-dry mountains; third-class travel at somewhere near its European worst. Greeks all but die in their futile efforts to take their customary afternoon nap on the rocking, jerking, bouncing, overcrowded train. Water-melons are the only relief for empty canteens. The track makes a complete loop about a vast valley, bare-yellow, some stone towers on the scorified hills, not a sign that water has ever been known there. A blazing, barren, mountainous landscape all about us.

There is an austere economy, a Spartan simplicity, about Grecian scenery. The mountains are mighty in mass contour and ruggedness; but in the metallic glare of Greek sunlight the whitish limestone formation vibrates with such delicate and ghostly colors that solid rocks have the appearance of phantoms. In the moistureless air there is so little diffusion of sunlight that distant objects stand out with an uncanny sharpness. Mountainous Greece is of a rare beauty indeed; a beauty which the beholder would not believe in a painting by the hand of man. But to the painter, Greek scenery presents a unique, an absorbing problem, an irritation as well as an inspiration. How on earth is he to paint phantoms and at the same time give them the appearance of solid rock? How can he express distance where ridge after ridge cuts against the cloudless sky with such disconcerting sharpness?

The burnt hills of Greece had little in common with the landscape of the artist's summer home of that name in verdant New York State.

Though it was Sunday afternoon, one whole village was holding a threshing-bee against the background of a big church among sun-scorched hills without a hint of green. Women in ankle-touching skirts stood sturdily, unseen legs apart, on flat threshing-sledges with rasp bottoms, each behind three or four mules. Women were screening wheat, hitching, unhitching, driving horses—in fact, but for the women I do not see how rural and village-dwelling Greece could continue to exist. The Greek countryman, at least, no more spoils his women by kindness than did the Turks with whom he lived for centuries. It is said that hard work never hurt any one. Never having tried it, I cannot testify. But I do know that compared with their men Greek country women look worn and downtrodden, more sunburned and wrinkle-eyed; that at thirty-five the wife of a Greek peasant or workman might easily be mistaken for his mother.

Traveling, the woman carries the bundle, and the baby, too, if there is one. It is she who lifts the heavy load down from the train, while her lord and master carries only his beads. One is moved to suggest that he give her the beads and take the bundle; but he would not understand, even if one spoke his language. Besides, his fellows would laugh at him if he treated his wife as in any way different from his other domestic animals. A man astride mule or donkey, perhaps with a baby in each of the two baskets behind him, certainly with the mother and the older children plodding along behind on foot, soon ceases to catch the attention.

The country women of Greece, especially down here in Morea, wrap their long loose hair in a cloth covering the head and hanging in a triangle down their backs. Often the

cloth covers the mouth also; but the hiding of the hair alone is proof of long Moslem influence. Only in the cities has bobbing made any appreciable headway. How the mere folded-cloth head-covering stays in place is beyond the ken of the masculine genus; but even a homely face looks well beneath it.

Their plumpness is the chief beauty, almost the only visible physical attraction, of most Greek women of to-day. I suspect it would be difficult to find a model for Venus—or for Hermes, either—among the modern Greeks. My companion said he had never beheld a less godly-looking race. He saw one good profile during the summer, but the front face rivaled the new moon. The sharp-eyed visitor can now and then catch a face worth photographing, but few indeed have the features we call classic Greek. On the other hand, the snooping traveler is spared the difficulties which befall the photographer in many lands. For the Greeks flee toward rather than away from a camera; all those within sight or hearing of any one or anything you plan to photograph lose no time in crowding themselves into the picture.

At another station we found a mountain-village wedding in full swing. A drummer and two fifiers supplied the glad noises. But the Greeks are not musical, and anything more dreary than the hoppings and circlings of a village wedding dance would be hard to imagine. The “dancing” was as sad as the “music” that attends this twenty-four-hour-long ceremony. The dancers, ranging from men down to children of three at the end of the line, all held hands as they meandered clumsily round and round the bare earth square surrounded by a circle of drinking and feasting spectators in chairs. The bride, in white semi-finery that sat queerly on her already toil-hardened body and sun-browned face, beside her equally bashful swain, was flanked by a dozen relatives or



Looking across the platia, or central square, of Sparta



Sparta to-day



Modern Spartans

honored spectators in home-made chairs, at the edge of the dusty little open space. Her expression was anything but what one expects in a bride; and no wonder. Greek marriage customs, especially in the villages, are in some ways still worthy of African savages.

But let us not abandon the dance so quickly. Every one is very solemn, for all the striving for levity. Even at the tables, where pure red wine (strange it is the countrymen who use no pitch) can be had for the waving of an empty glass, there is no real gaiety. Every few minutes the man in charge goes about, hat in hand, among the bystanders, stuffs up under his hat brim the ragged money he gathers, hands it out to the "musicians" each round or two, sees to it that they are kept merry with wine. He is an "American," it transpires, and points out another just back of the opposite rank of spectators, who in turn smiles a fat tipsy smile, waves a hand with a gesture of equality, a proudly prosperous welcome. All the mountain village, and evidently a neighboring one, is gathered; shows every intention of staying until the last wine-skin is hung up empty. An almost barbaric tom-tom cadence followed us as far beyond as our ears could catch it.

One of the ills of Greek life is the dowry required of a bride—that is, of her father. Discussion of this, bargaining over the amount of it, takes the place of love-making. Whereas in some countries father and mother give their attention to selling the daughter to the highest bidder, the Greek father toils from her birth to be able to buy her a husband when the time comes, fifteen to eighteen years later. If he has several daughters, he "goes broke"; or the younger ones have to marry low-class men who will accept them without a dowry.

There is much intermarriage, especially in villages, clans,

castes, which may be one of the reasons for Greek deterioration. Even men returning from the United States for the express purpose of bringing back a bride, usually seek her in the village from which they came. Few have any idea when they land who she will be, except that she must be some one whose maidenhood all the village can vouch for. The eligible girls are trotted out; the "American" looks them over, carries on certain inquiries, particularly in the all-important matter of the dowry, and makes his choice. The girl seems to have little or no voice in the matter; accepts what fate has assigned her, and prepares for her wedding. In some parts of Greece the bride must provide a furnished house—happy thought!—but grooms from the United States take it in cash.

According to Greek law, if a groom charges that his bride proved not to be a virgin, and the other side cannot refute his claim, he can repudiate the deal and hand her back to her parents.

I met men who had lived twenty years in the United States, men who had served in our army and navy, some of them influential business men in our large cities, proud of their American citizenship, who had just been through the elaborate, medieval, virgin-proving, village form of marriage, perhaps inherited from the Turks; though to-day marriage and divorce laws are quite modern in what remains of Turkey. Especially in the larger cities of Greece, advanced young men are beginning to carry off the girl and marry her, American fashion; or they go at once on a honeymoon immediately after the ceremony, taking their chances with the law. But few Greek-Americans choose a girl in the cities, or anywhere except in their old home town, where people can assure the groom that she has all the simple old virtues, if not many others.

At Tripolitza, where Greek patriots first hoisted the flag of independence in 1821 (to which the Turks retaliated by massacring twenty-five thousand Christians on the island of Chios and selling nearly twice that number as slaves in Egypt and Asia), passengers to Sparta change to automobiles. There has long been talk of a railway; but to this day only the motor-car connects with the outside world the site of the ancient capital of Laconia. Many well-known American, and some European, automobiles of the larger types were drawn up in the baking-hot station yard. Chinese-driven Dodges across the Gobi are hardly as loaded down as were the half-dozen cars that got away half an hour or so after we had been stuffed into one of them; and the road to Sparta is much more difficult and many times more dangerous. There were ten full-sized persons, including two women, in our car, all the mails, and the baggage of all ten of us, much of it heavy and bulky.

But cheap enough, surely; eighty-eight drachmas for a mountainous ride of more than two hours in an excellent car, as cars go in the Near East. Just before we started, a woman in the back seat set up a howl which forced the mail-contractor to change drivers. We learned later that the man to whom he had proposed to risk our lives had spilled another load of travelers and been forbidden to drive this road with passengers again. Strange, isn't it, that a van-load of ostensibly sane people, all of whom probably value their lives, will trust themselves to any old driver on such a road, will not even ask to see his driving permit? (In Greece, by the way, this costs more than forty dollars, the owner's license more than two hundred; and there is a hundred-percent tax on gasoline!)

Between Tripolitza and Sparta lies some of the finest, and fiercest, scenery in Greece. It is a Spartan trip indeed, to

those of timid disposition, that wild two- or three-hour ride by a highway wholly innocent of guard-rails, over the mountains to modern Sparta, but scenically worth any danger and inconvenience. Stony terraces, splendid engineering, even if the heart is too often in the throat. An excellent piece of road-building, mounting ever higher to the top of a great rocky ridge, high above a slightly greener land beyond, a great valley, an immense hollow, backed by the mighty ash-gray Taygetos range walling off the horizon, like a row of mammoth cinder heaps. On the highest point, 7905 feet above the sea, gleams the inevitable little chapel; and down below, tiny in the center of its great plain, lies Sparta. No wonder the Spartans were a self-contained nation.

Not only is this road from Tripolitza the one connecting link between the kingdom of Menelaus and the rest of the world, but it goes nowhere else. Road-building costs money; and Greece is poor. About the time we reached Athens, the well-known manufacturer of our most popular gas-driven vehicle offered to give the Greeks good roads everywhere, if his cars were given a monopoly for a certain number of years. But his number of years was evidently more than the Greek Government cared, or could guarantee, to deliver, and his offer was turned down. At last reports it was expected that a somewhat similar proposition by the Asiatic Petroleum Company would be accepted.

We stepped, or at least wormed our way, out of the automobile, walked into a hotel, and "Parlez vous . . . ?" I began.

"No, but I speak English," replied the man at a desk in the upstairs hallway. "I ran a restaurant for four years in Greenwood, North Carolina."

But it had not taught him American exorbitance. His beds were only twenty drachmas a night; in fact, the price was

posted in the room. The view out our big double French window across the graveled platia, the central square of Sparta, to the labyrinthine Taygetos range beyond would have made ten times that price a modest demand. It was so good that the artist sat down in our little balcony at once, without so much as leaving the grime of travel in our single wash-basin, to paint the scene; and only the setting sun stopped him.

The broad valley of the Eurotas in which Sparta sits is one vast dark-green stretch of olive orchards, punctuated here and there by the exclamation point of the cypress. There is a delightful air, perhaps because of its situation among mountains not many miles from the sea. The proximity of the Taygetos to the west gives the town an early sunset. We had reached it just as the disappearing sun was coloring the savage-looking mountains, so that their saw-toothed peaks stood out weirdly against the evening sky. The tops, where the sunlight lingered longest, were an indescribable, an unpaintable tint of rose and gold, with abrupt changes to blues or purples in the shadows of the ravines that deeply gashed the slopes of the woodless barrier.

The town itself has the un-Grecian distinction of almost as many trees as if it were an American city, and seems to have a touch of Spanish in its make-up; or was it merely that the Taygetos carried the mind back to the Andes? Red-tiled roofs, arched doorways, wrought-iron grilles, sheep and goats grazing here and there; some good two-story buildings, wide, right-angled streets, and always that imposing wall of mountains shutting the little kingdom off from the rest of the world. Perhaps it was less the flattery of Paris than a longing to see what was beyond that walled horizon which turned Helen of Sparta into Helen of Troy.

But though this is the site it is by no means the Sparta

we read about in school. There is very little left of the ancient city: some old columns kicking about, used as door-steps, as garden seats, only a few things which any one but an archæologist would recognize as of interest. To-day it is more of a town than its ancient rival, Thebes, but an entirely modern town, even in its costumes. So there is really nothing to see in Sparta except its beautiful site, no evidence of greater hardiness, braver endurance of suffering, of simpler fare than other Greeks, few signs that any of the old Spartan virtues have survived. The outdoor coffee-shop and sitting in the shade are quite as much in vogue as in the rest of Greece. Possibly the people are a bit more alert than in some other parts of the country; but they are certainly as aloof to the charms of art as were the old Spartans; they are no longer laconic, and they take no iron money.

About noon, we went by auto-bus across the vast olive orchard west of the city, to a village at the foot of the Taygetos. There, far from the outside world, where surely we might for once have been at a loss for an interpreter, the first man we met had by his own admission once been manager of eight Chicago restaurants, had at twenty publicly wrestled Frank Gotch—and still looked capable of it. Having come home two years before, when his father died, he had been in litigation ever since. Now that was over, and more lost than gained, he was going out to Australia. For there, he asserted, he could become a British subject in six months and be able to go to Canada, from where “it is a cinch to get back to Chicago.” Just why so Americanized a fellow was without a passport was a point he did not deign to explain.

High above us piled the ruins of Mistra, where in medieval days an enterprising monarch managed to plaster against the sheer eastern slope of the Taygetos a city which flourished from the end of the thirteenth to the beginning of the fif-

teenth century. It is a striking sight, that first glimpse of a whole medieval town, several churches, a gigantic castle, an immense fortress, all hanging upon a hillside that just escaped being a precipice, overlooking the whole valley of the Spartans. We ought perhaps to have scorned Mistra. A professor of Greek from the Ozarks, whom we met that summer, boasted that he had refused even to look up at it as he rode by beneath it. But much as we deplored the cluttering up of ancient Greek ruins by the comparatively weak builders of the Middle Ages, the sight of that perpendicular town drew us like a magnet.

The recent and future Chicagoan found a boy to carry our belongings and led us in person to an arbor restaurant a little way up the hill, where the artist had his usual green-tomato salad. Water flowed incessantly into an old carved marble sarcophagus covered with bacchante figures that would grace any museum, yet which is merely a watering-trough. For all the bucolic air of Marmara, as the restaurant spot is called, a priest had been murdered there by a jealous husband, only the Sunday before. Yet to-day there was no more evidence of this act of violence than of a raid on a New York night club, the evening after.

From the sarcophagus, zigzag stony trails clamber upward through the ruins. A score of the houses have been patched up by squatters. Two or three of the ruined churches are occupied, at least as residences. Some twenty families call Mistra home. An archæological society owns the place, and objects to the squatters; but the Government opines that people come first. Greek nuns live in the best-preserved church of Venetian days. Visitors usually carry off the impression that they are more contented than intelligent, or helpful to mankind, to any one but themselves; and there are rumors that even immorality is not unknown among them.

Some remnants of delightful frescoes can be dimly seen on the walls and ceilings of another of the most artistic Venetian churches, a little Byzantine gem, both inside and out. In a sort of dungeon vault under the walls of this ancient chapel, and in a stone outhouse in a corner of its stone-walled yard, we found the bones of twoscore or more monks or priests. From among these human bones many skulls grinned at us, like monks who had enjoyed life more than their pious contemporaries supposed. Each skeleton was still more or less inclosed within its rotting cloth sack, with a once red cross sewed upon it. A shin-, an arm-bone, a rib was in most cases tied to the corresponding skull by a string through the eye-hole and temple, to keep the component parts from being scrambled. But in the main the bones were thrown together like so much rubbish, like the mementoes from a grandfather's attic which are of no visible use but which the descendants do not quite feel like throwing away entirely. No one was there; we might have carried off an armful of skulls and shin-bones, were we collectors of that kind of souvenirs. An ideal background for a blood-chilling movie, Mistra's medieval bone-yard.

A whole city of the past, now overrun by goats, lay up that steep hillside, crowned with the remnants of what must have been an immense structure. Those archaeologists we have been congratulating ourselves on not being would have reveled in it. Evidently the builders had knocked off pieces of rock of any shape, and stuck crumbly bits of broken tiles, the odds and ends of earlier buildings, between the stones to fill in the walls. The ruins of the prince's palace suggest a very extensive residence; but the uncovered gables and broken walls crumble into mere heaps of stone slabs and rotting red tiles when one climbs along them with a kodak.

From the ruined fortress at the summit spreads a view

of all the ancient kingdom of Sparta. Modern Sparta, with its bulking church, stands forth plainly; the olive-orchard valley, sun-baked, lies before the beholder in its entirety. Taygetos towers almost within reach across a great gorge. Far down below are round stone-paved threshing floors that look like mere spots caused by raindrops. New villages, perhaps hardly a century old, are tucked away among trees up a neighboring hillside; three larger towns are scattered along the great mountain range behind, the nearest on the very edge of a sheer granite cliff hundreds of feet high.

CHAPTER XXIV

OVER THE TAYGETOS TO MESSENIA

DOWN again at the bacchante sarcophagus we found awaiting us the weary old lady mule we were to share between us through the beautiful Langada pass over the Taygetos. Or, since also our baggage, and now and then our driver, rode, perhaps I should say among us. The ex-ri-val of Gotch had arranged the matter—at a commission, we suspected, in this one case—and the creature wore what the Greeks call a saddle. But there were no stirrups, just as we expected, in spite of repeated insistence and vociferous promises during the negotiations. Greek saddles are rounded wooden frames covered, if at all, with a rug or a pelt. Most Greeks ride sideways, hence they care nothing for stirrups. I refused to move until stirrups were forthcoming. The driver at length improvised what the exile from Chicago insisted were worthy of that name, promising to run back home from our first stopping-place and have real stirrups ready in the morning, and we were off.

Just why we hired that mule at all, since walking would have been faster and much more comfortable (and we walked most of the time anyway) than clinging to the beast like a small boy at the zoo as the driver led or beat or pushed him down ten-foot drops and up over wild tangles of roots and rocks, is not quite clear to me to this day. I fancy it was because I feared the artist's legs might not stand the strain

of the twenty-odd mountainous miles ahead of us, while he dreaded lest we be undone by a failure on my part to live up to a reputation for foot-work. Ah, well, even a light pack is a nuisance atop Grecian-summer streams of sweat.

That evening we must have made as much as three miles; it may even have been four, to the little town of Trypi, high up in the throat of the great Langada gorge. Trypi has plenty of water, and is so green and evening-cool and mountainous that it suggests some town in Switzerland; and it would be an ideal place to sleep, if only the "hotel" run by an ex-American had any sleepable beds. Lacking these, it was chiefly notable as the only place in Greece where we were seriously overcharged for our accommodations and as the only time I saw a drunken Greek. But he had learned the disgusting trick in Philadelphia.

There are three passes to be crossed on this trip from the ancient kingdom of Sparta to that of Messenia. Even at that season the Langada actually had a stream of water pouring down it, though this soon disappeared, I know not whither, as we mounted the gorge. The rivers of Greece are all very well, if only they would not lay off during a long summer. It takes an unusually youthful spirit to thrill over streams wet enough for nothing but a hen's dust-bath.

But the Langada is a beautiful region even without water: sheer granite cliffs, many trees, a delightfully cool breeze that morning. Youthful pine forests covered whole hillsides; here and there stood a grandfather tree that should have been able to remember when Spartan babes of unpromising physique were abandoned on Taygetos. Walnut trees, veritable walls of flowers, whole vistas of pine-clad hills, another Greece entirely from the one we had thus far known. A tree clutching in its grasp several big stones, like a frightened Spartan mother embracing her children. Yet one could almost

hear the muleteer cursing this beautiful mountain gorge through which he had so often traveled, wishing it were flat and level and easy-going, like the commonplace plain of Sparta.

Once there was a laboriously built road, with a great sustaining wall; but it had been so thoroughly washed away by the river which sometimes flows here that we were soon clambering along bare rocks, laboriously picking our way most of the morning over white water-polished stones of the dry river-bed. There were no towns, no houses, almost no signs of human existence, on the first leg of that twelve-hour ride-and-walk from Trypi to the hot seaside city of Kalamata. Once we met a quaint old denizen of the forest-patched range, in auto-tire moccasins, different even in manner from the madding residents of the sun-scorched plains of Greece; and once a boy of seven, finding his way without difficulty or panic through the mountainous wilderness. But most of the time there was a glorious stillness, a delightful, un-Grecian quiet, except for the tinkling of the mule's bell which, according to the driver, corroborated by the man on vacation from Chicago, could under no circumstances be removed or silenced.

We had counted upon taking turns on the mule's back; which worked very well, except that the un-muled artist insisted that the most dangerous parts of the trail always turned up when he happened to be aboard. It was not true, of course. But the artist had never ridden a foreign mule before, if indeed his claim of having once bestridden an English-speaking example of the species was not overdrawn. The bravest of us, nay, even I myself, are likely to be mildly startled by the first experience on the hurricane deck of a mountain mule, which likes nothing better than to walk on the

extreme edge of every blood-curdling precipice, gorge, ravine, sickening depth, stopping now and then to gaze meditatively down as if debating the wisdom of suicide. And as every experienced traveler knows, that is always the cue for the mule-driver, be he Greek, Chinese, or Hottentot, to lash the animal unexpectedly across the hind legs. If the rider remonstrates, the fellow merely shrugs his shoulders and remarks that his mule has never fallen—yet.

Like the average animal, outside our own perverted species, this particular mule had a leg at each corner; but the rider would rarely have suspected it as he dropped, now forward, now rearward, with a suddenness which would have made the worst-gaited camel of the desert a welcome exchange. Behold, then, the devotee of the higher arts clinging ardently with both hands to saddle, mane, and nerves, as the beast incessantly and persistently fell from under him; looking forward with the alleged longing of Penelope to the end of the half-hour when it would again be my turn to risk my life. It takes the tenderfoot some little time to learn that both mules and automobiles can do things in strange countries which we should never dream of expecting, or even permitting, them to do at home.

Toward noon, over the first top, with a rest among the trees in a pine-scented breeze. But that pleasure was soon over; for a hundred yards farther on we were down among miserable, bare, dusty, sun-scorched hills again, on the verge of dying of thirst when there appeared at last a walled-in spring, like an oasis in the desert. It seemed to be the outcropping of a perennial big stream; yet all the world about it was dry as the Sahara. Winter would no doubt have been a better time for our travels in Hellas, if only for the snow luckier travelers claim to have seen on her mountains. But

then again, reading farther on in other travelers' tales, of rain, swollen rivers, mud, perpetually cloud-veiled summits, perhaps our time was not so ill-chosen as we fancied then in our dripping and basted condition. Present hardships are always the worst.

The reputed inn at Ladha was out of commission. It must have several days' notice before it is prepared to function even to the extent of its slight capacity. But one "American" had come home to live out his languid days there, which was as great a boon to us as our coming was to him. Food, after all, has many synonyms. From there on, half an hour's descent so steep and stony that even the driver would not mount when both of us declined the pleasure. An ancient bridge, high above a tantalizingly unattainable river that was actually flowing; then such a climb up the sun-blasted side of another bare range as most men know only in their nightmares. Opposite lay another immense mountain wall, like a burned-out slag-heap, which shut us off all that afternoon from the perhaps cooler north. Yet there were tiny farms, queerly shaped little terraced patches, near the bottom of that vast dry ridge, pin-points of green here and there on it, magnificent vistas along the mountain-flanking road beyond, and great green masses in the hazy distance. Only one traveler did we meet on all that western side of the range, a woman in triangular head-cloth, sitting sidewise on a droop-eared mule. The descent from the Langada was far less pleasant than the ascent; wise travelers will turn our itinerary about if possible.

Finally, another summit and a vast view, the goal in plain sight, though still far away, out there where the southern end of Messenia stretches its naked yellow cape into the blue sea. The half-moon city of Kalamata, astride its broad dry river, a mile inland. Nea Kalamata, much smaller, on the

shore itself, with one bulking building—no, not a seaside hotel but a flour-mill. Far to the westward, the smoke of a burning patch of mountainside; the mathematically straight line, across the deep-green plain we were to find completely covered with vineyards, of the railway branch to Nisi, all hazy with the westering sun.

Down on the edge of the hot plain we fell upon an automobile highway slowly climbing into the hills. In no distant future, travelers may dash even through the Langada by motor-car, watching the precipices instead of seeing the landscape. On along a road two inches deep in dust, all breeze, all joy in life, gone. I strode on ahead, passed an aged bush-grown fortress, turned into a river, along the very middle of which gentlemen of Kalamata were strolling, swinging their canes; others, not gentlemen, screening its grayish gravel.

Quite a modern city, Kalamata: bobbed hair, pressed trousers, even street cars, the only ones in the Peloponnesus, in all Greece, except at Athens and Piræus and at Salonika. Yet in the center of a busy, trolley-line street stands a deep open well, easily eight feet across and forty feet down to the surface of the water, with dozens of deep grooves worn in its thigh-high stone curbing by the ropes of centuries of water-seekers. The Hotel Panhellenion will do as well as any, since the ceaseless noise and the constantly swirling dust can no more be escaped than can single wash-bowls.

It is a hard climb from the station of Tzeferemini, where the morning train dropped us, to the top of Ithome; too stiff, I suspect, for a mere artist's legs. At any rate, I lost him while I was picking cactus-apple needles out of my fingers after an altruistic attempt to give him a new treat. Like a true artist he just wandered on, thinking of nothing but his art, and I saw him no more—that day. The 2630 feet to the summit of Ithome felt many times that, up the bare, white-

stony, sun-threshed hillside, completely cut off from any breeze that blew. There is a psychological something about climbing, as about most tasks: if you had not planned to climb, as I had not that morning, it is very hard work; if you have, it is easy.

On the summit is an abandoned monastery, inhabited by one old hermit, who had evidently gone down to the wicked world below; nor had he left lunch for visitors. Worse still, no water. I had endured a horrible breakfast in a monastery on the way up; had eaten some grapes along the trail from the station; but foolishly had brought none along, uncertain how serious may be the punishment for filching grapes in vine-covered Messenia. Yet it is queer how raging a thirst may be blown away. Cloud shadows, so rare in Greece, played over all Messenia and the ranges beyond it. Undoubtedly I might have counted a hundred towns from that height, had I cared to take the trouble. The stillness and a delicious breeze induced a nap in a nook of the northern monastery wall. I finished, too, a book I had brought along, but lived to regret it, as we do so many of the pleasures we succumb to.

In the ancient capital of Messenia, far down below, the imagination could picture Tyrtæus, the Athenian schoolmaster turned warrior, limping along with his lyre. A wall, in spots, five and a half miles long, the measurers will tell you, some of its towers still standing—but what are walls to any one who has been in China? No such stone-cutting as at Machu Picchu, either. Many stones, some of which show evidences of having been deliberately shaped, probably by human beings, and once placed in certain definite positions by our more or less remote ancestors. Alas, I fear I have not even the ingredients of an archæologist; my natural reaction to any heap of ruins is, Well, what of it?

A big job, to be sure, that tower-punctuated wall of once



Among the ruins of the medieval city of Mistra, which clung to a steep hillside on the edge of the Sparta plain



A woman of the Taygetos, on the trail we followed over that historic range



Only an abandoned monastery, inhabited by one hermit, remains now on the summit of Ithome

famous Messene, that great circular Arcadian gate, the top stone slab of which has lain half fallen since long before our New World was discovered. But again, what of it? The ancient flagstoned road down which a few languid modern Messenians plod on foot or on donkey-back goes to what remains of the stoa, the ancient market-place, the stadium. Yet life down in that little valley, with its lazy village laid in stone shelves along the western base of Ithome, is no different from that in the rest of modern Greece. In fact, there were half a dozen "Americans" among the male population playing cards, that sunny afternoon, in the village café.

It served me right for carrying a watch, even the cheapest of pocket timepieces; your true vagabond is impervious to time. Also it would have been wiser to have taken the stiffer short-cut over the ridge between Ithome and its lower neighbor. When the sun obviously gave the lie to the watch, there began a two-hour race against time, by the circuitous highway back to Tzeferemini—ending just in time to hear the last train to Kalamata rattle by me beyond its cactus hedge a hundred yards from the station. At the station a note from the lost artist. He had, so it averred, punctured a foot in a cactus hedge in trying—in vain, glory be!—to purloin the grapes of some poor Messenian; had enjoyed certain pleasing adventures at the estate of an ex-Bostonian, and had taken, false companion, the earlier train back to Kalamata.

If only I had brought my baggage! We were to pass through Tzeferemini again next morning. But what hope of recovering my scattered possessions by means of a telegram, in Greek, to an American-speaking artist rarely capable of gathering together his own meager belongings for a new stage of the journey? One of the "Americans" in Tzefere-mini had a Ford truck; but he wanted more than its turn-in value to belabor it down to Kalamata. The town was aghast

when I filled my canteen at the station well and set out to walk there. Twenty miles, they said, and it had seemed twice that in the train that morning, though luckily they turned out only to be kilometers.

No food since the dreadful parody thereon at the monastery half-way up Ithome that morning. But grapes, unlimited quantities of those currant-grapes of the Peloponnesus all about me, and no fences, not even cactus hedges along the railway in most places. A coolish walk in the night? Not so cool but that I soon resembled a fountain statue. Blacker than ever Greek summer night, before or since. Dogs all young and ambitious. Summer shacks, crop-watchers' make-shifts, with weak lights and many voices in them; even the country people evidently sit up all night. Some of the walls so flimsy that . . . but Greek country women do not seem to shed their superfluous garments even to sleep. Never before nor since have so many grapes disappeared down a single maw. But who would have known that large quantities of the currant-grapes of Greece have the same effect as a similar amount of what the druggist calls ol ricini?

There were times when I would gladly have lain down and let the night roll on without me, had there been a spot worthy to receive me. But I may have said before that there is not a blade of grass in all Greece; and even if I have not mentioned it, there are mosquitoes, in plenty. Once, at a phonograph-screaming hamlet, the heavenly boon of a fresh supply of water, quickly exuded through the pores of a soaking skin. But why harrow the reader's nerves beyond endurance? Into our hotel room, dripping like a punctured wine-skin, to say nothing worse, just at midnight, to find the artist still living in spite of a punctured foot and a justifiably troubled conscience.

CHAPTER XXV

WITH A HALT AT OLYMPIA

NEXT morning a wind worthy of our Western prairies was tossing the streets of Kalamata into the faces of all those foolish enough to venture into them. We lost no time in boarding the same train as the day before, after a bitter struggle, with the help of three "Americans," to get what had to pass for a breakfast. Luckily, a few things to eat were sold along the way, though in the main only *stafilia*—grapes, perish the thought! Greek soil, as every dutiful student knows, has always been propitious to the wine. But the Peloponnesus is grape headquarters. Dry as it is, Morea is completely ringed with vineyards, mainly of the little currant-grapes which grow so incredibly thick on their clusters. The vines are so closely planted that the whole plain of Messenia, all the lowlands of Greece's southern peninsula, look like one vast vineyard.

So far as Greece is concerned, *phylloxera* has as yet invaded only Macedonia. Messenia has long been so rich in grapes that since ancient times its people have been reputed rather indolent for lack of the necessity of hard work; have often been conquered by the hardier Spartans and many another. And all the grapes of the Peloponnesus were verging upon the ripe-enough now; soon picking would begin everywhere. Perhaps the people seemed lazy only during those last days of July, because grapes must be picked with a rush, once

picking starts, and the inhabitants may merely have been resting up against the ordeal ahead.

A fruitful land in many other ways, too, the stony, sun-scorched republic of Greece. Mulberry trees are plentiful; there are silk factories in Kalamata and Sparta. Watermelons and peponia (muskmelon is our nearest equivalent) grace every summer meal; figs almost for the asking, two crops of them a year in Morea. Huge tomatoes everywhere, though all the wiles of an artist cannot entice a really ripe one to table; the Greeks seem to throw them away as worthless when they reach that stage. Plums to be proud of; pears that are hard; peaches which are harder; apples harder still, and small and tasteless to the pampered American taste.

But grapes, especially the little compact currant-grapes that sell so widely in America as dried currants, are the pride of the Peloponnesus. There are big succulent grapes of another species and color, too, and fairly free from that olricini quality, if you care to go and look for them. But the little purple ones hold all except a corner of the stage. Picking of these began in earnest on Monday morning, August first, though during the last days of July some splotches of them were already laid out in the sunshine to dry. The women do most of the picking. It is rather too hard work for the men. If they cannot continue to sit in the shade rattling their beads, at least they prefer to stay at the drying-field, where there is likely to be at worst the scanty shade of an olive-tree, and receive the grapes brought in by the women.

Thirty drachmas, almost forty cents, is the average wage for a day of ten hours in the vineyards. The pickers use long slender knives, lay the grapes in peck baskets, load those when full into much larger and very heavy baskets, which they carry in on one shoulder. Some one, preferably female,

will have swept, with a broom made of tufts of hillside brambles, the patch of ground toward which the baskets converge. Men, usually, spread out the grapes, great purple patches of which begin to dot the otherwise green landscape—green in spite of the complete absence of grass, so closely are the vineyards planted in this soil-hungry land. Sometimes the earth-floored drying-fields are spread with canvas, or with heavy paper; most of them with nothing at all, which is why your dentist is occasionally the gainer from the raisins or dried currants you buy.

Some hang their grapes on drying-racks of many stories, and most grape-spreads have canvas over them at night. It is rarely necessary in the daytime. But canvas or not, the drying grapes are sure to be powdered with swirling dust in the ten days or so during which the grueling cloudless sunshine of Greece turns them into raisins that are bought, under the name of dried currants, by millions of American men, women, and children; and it is neither Greek nor good for the grapes to wash them before packing.

At Patras great casks of currant-grapes, thousands of boxes of dried ones, come in on great rattling two-wheeled carts drawn by a mule or two. Gipsy-looking men and women camp beneath the trees along the dusty roads; swarms of vineyard workers saunter homeward through the dust at sunset. There are wine-presses where old men tramp out the grape juice for next year's wine, with bare feet obviously never washed, their aged legs purple to the knees. But nowhere is it far back to the hills, where the grape waxeth not.

Thousands of tons of dried stafilas are loaded into steamers at Patras, for all the primitive wharf facilities. I forget just how many hundred tons went into the boat that carried me homeward, all billed to Akron, Ohio. Most American cities get their share; England refuses to be slighted. The shippers,

if they told the truth, were getting seven thousand drachmas per thousand pounds in London that summer. Of this the Government of Greece takes one half, they said; the growers get what is left of the other half when the middlemen between field and foreign shores have admitted themselves requited. Other farm produce in Greece pays only a six-percent government tax, complain the peasants of the Peloponnesus.

But we are getting far ahead of our dawdling train. There are some groves of eucalyptus at Peloponnesus stations, but not much else to recommend them. At Pyrgos those so unfortunate as to wish to visit ancient Olympia change cars—unless they know the ropes well enough to get off at a single station building within reach of a shady grove and catch the same branch train later. It will be hours of waiting, in any case. Greece has not yet thought of arranging her schedules to accommodate those who come to see the remnants of her ancient glories. Still, if you are ambitious, irrespective of the heat, you can walk from the junction to Olympia and be finishing dinner when the misguided train travelers arrive.

Dante missed a striking comparison by never seeing Pyrgos in midsummer. Luckily, an ex-American has opened a big ice plant there, impossible as it may seem to make water congeal in Greece. He sells ice at fourteen to sixteen drachmas per twenty pounds, where it is worth its weight in gold. Has a flour-mill, too, and even a brewery—enticing word. Returned Greeks certainly are a boon to their untraveled fellow-townsmen.

Xenophon, you may have heard, came to live somewhere along the coast near Pyrgos when he was booted out of Athens. (Strange that he did not come to America.) The Pyrgos town council has spent its money on a fancy marble

monument to a dead soldier, instead of cleaning the streets. There was a lovely funeral there that afternoon, too, with which to while away those four or five hot hours of waiting. A young woman who had died of tuberculosis was carried through the dusty, sun-baked streets in the usual open coffin, her hands crossed on her sunken breasts, her waxy face oscillating with the motion of the carriers, on foot, of course; four soiled acolytes, a priest, and a dozen mourners tramping beside her.

The wise traveler with time to spare comes overland to Olympia, from Megalopolis, on mule-back or shank's mare, past Andritzena and the isolated standing temple at Bassæ. Thus he not only avoids that roasting afternoon at Pyrgos but sees the rugged mountains and the sometimes flowing brooks of Arcadia. But the demon Time forbade us this pleasure. We got in after dark, and found a semi-foreign inn still functioning, though the main tourist hotel is closed in the summer season. Somehow one fancies that the ancient Greeks were more enterprising in organizing the traffic to the site of their Olympic games than are those of to-day.

Olympia is reputed unendurable for Northerners in Greek midsummer. Perhaps it usually is at that time of year; if so, we played in luck for once. Being only a hundred and forty feet above sea-level and as far south as Virginia, it should have been insufferably hot. Yet we found that late July morning delightful beneath the pine-trees, murmuring in the breeze like a maiden under her lover's caresses. Trees grown, I suppose, since the ten-foot layer of river sand, as the bank about the ruins shows, was excavated.

Somehow I had pictured many of the famous buildings at Olympia as still standing, even in the face of finding so many other ancient-Greek ruins mere fields of stones. But it is quite a job to stand for two or three thousand years,

as almost any policeman can tell you. Guide-books neglect to mention that no building is still on its feet in ancient Olympia, with the result that many a traveler, expecting something as fine as the new hotel in his home town, is sorely disappointed. The nearest to a standing building is the pitiful little brick Byzantine church, pitiful at least in contrast with the great stone Temple of Zeus, razed to its main floor. The early Christians should have been restrained by an injunction, or worse, from tearing down the magnificent things of the past or from erecting their sorry-by-contrast structures among them.

Enough remains of the Olympia of ancient days, however, so that even a scantily developed imagination can picture what was once here, and admire it. The contrast of ever-green trees and age-beautiful stones made this another place from which the artist was dragged with difficulty. From the vantage-point of a broken pillar pedestal, something of the architectural and sculptural splendor which reigned here, before the founding of Rome, can be guessed, though earthquake long ago laid everything prone. That scornful manner in which a momentary trembling of the earth tumbles over the puny works of ephemeral man is nowhere better illustrated than at Olympia, where row upon row of the once mighty pillars of the Temple of Zeus have been laid to one side in stones six feet in diameter and four feet thick, like stacks of poker chips knocked over by an angry player.

Olympia in Elis, as of course you know, was as much a center of the ancient Greek world as the Yankee Stadium is of New York City. I assume it is no news to you that athletic games lasted for five days during the Panhellenic festival held at Olympia every four years, in honor of Zeus; nor that their Olympiads marked among Greeks the divisions



The contrast of evergreen trees and age-ripened stones makes Olympia a sight to see even to-day



Plentiful shade and a constant breeze made Olympia endurable even on a Grecian midsummer day



One row still remains of the arched stones that roofed the entrance of participants in the ancient Olympic games

of time from 776 B.C. to 394 A.D. Thus an ancient Greek lady would say, with a coy air and a quick mental miscalculation, "Oh, yes, I was born during the ninth Olympiad, just after Digetogenes the Thessalian won the hundred-yard dash." Even our ball games and fistic championships have not yet become that important, though you do now and then hear some old-timer say, "It happened the year Fitz knocked out Corbett," or a débutante of yesteryear whisper, "You see, I lost it the year Red Grange stopped peddling ice, but . . ."

Only one row of stones remains of the long arched passageway which once roofed the entrance to the stadium, and there are no games at Olympia now, except those of hotel-keepers against tourists, which are far inferior to such performances in most of Europe. To be sure, the Olympic games were renovated and renewed in 1896; who should know it better than I, whose renowned college house-mate was the Digetogenes of the second modern Olympiad? But that was at Athens, in the big new marble stadium built by a wealthy Greek of Alexandria; and although the games have been held in several places since, Olympia has not been so much as suggested. For one thing little more than the starting-place has been dug out of the ten-foot layer of sand the Alpheos spread over the place who knows how many centuries ago. About one split second after the pistol-shot, the hundred-yard-dashers would fetch up with a bump against a sheer ten-foot sand-bank, unless they could hurdle it, in which case they would not be hundred-yard-dashers; now, I ask you.

In the beginning the foot-race was the only event, and it was always the principal one. But in the effete later days there were also, besides the athletic contests, competitions in music and poetry and essay-writing—how our spectators

would yawn nowadays! And the victor's prize was an olive-branch! Can you bear it? Present-day "amateurs" who have ever heard of them must laugh their heads off at the Greek scabs of that benighted time! But often the grateful home town of the winning athlete would chip in and erect along the esplanade at Olympia a marble statue of him, some of which are still in existence, two thousand or more years later; and let any modern athlete laugh that one down.

In fact, it is to see what is left of one of those marble athletes that most visitors come to Olympia, or even to Greece. But the Hermes of Praxiteles is not down among the ruins of ancient Olympia. It is up at the commonplace stuccoed museum on the hill above, just now in a temporary woodshed outside it; for workmen were doing something or other to the one-room-and-anteroom museum, at a modern labor-union pace and interest. Even the artist admitted that here at last was something perfect in his line, at least what is left of it. With the arms gone and the legs below the knees lost in the mud (for such I take the plaster about them to represent), who knows but that some of the parts may have been less successfully modeled than what has come down to us, as may even be the case with the Venus of Milo.

But the Hermes is perfect in every detail left, as satisfying as the lady from Melos, as blood-quickenning as the Parthenon. In spite of its mutilation, only those who have seen it in the flesh (and living flesh it seems indeed, thanks perhaps to centuries of lying in the mud of the Alpheos) can fully realize its magnificence. One can all but see the marvelous torso move in the act of breathing. Alas, it is so fine that it rather spoils one for other sculptures. Having seen the Hermes, one is inclined to go home without bothering to look in on the others.

Yet the statue of Nike on the rear wall of the Olympia

museum is worth walking a mile to see, in spite of the fact that she has completely lost face. Who knows how many even greater masterpieces may have been carried off, destroyed, deliberately smashed by statue-hating Moslems; how many may still lie buried beneath the ten-foot blanket of Alpheos sand? There seem to have been hundreds of statues at Olympia; a statue there then was as common as a motor-car here now; and where are they all to-day?

CHAPTER XXVI

WESTWARD TO CORFU

THERE is an ex-king's ex-summer "palace" close beside the railway between Pyrgos and Patras, amid oaks, pines, eucalyptus. Hundreds of soldiers used to watch those trees in the old days, even when the king was playing roulette at Monte Carlo. Now that the republic has taken the place over, there are only three or four. The country is one great fruit garden all the way to the chief port of the Peloponnesus—the narrow lowland strip, that is; the mountains are never far off to the right.

The Peloponnesus railway runs (or, more exactly, crawls) along the unpaved water-front at Patras, between rows of café chairs and scores of small boats eager to take you out to some steamer or other. Here again the ships all anchor just far enough from the stone-faced wharf so that passengers must contribute to the boatmen, the usual water-front ruffraff, some of whom, or which, speak a little Italian. Though Kalamata has a trolley, more important Patras does not. It seems it once did; had, in fact, the first street cars in Greece. But rails and all were taken away during the war, for emergency purposes, and have never been returned.

The second port of Greece and principal exit for currant-grape growing Morea is rather striking from the sea. There is a clear view of the mountainous islands of Zante and Cephalonia, and across the bay, plainly in sight on its slope, lies Missolonghi. A massive old fortress, containing prison-

ers and soldiers, crowns the broad hill about which the city climbs. A building long ago copied from St. Sophia in Constantinople, and which was for many years a mosque and once the San Marcos of the Venetians, is now again a proud Greek Orthodox church, painfully white in a brand-new coat of paint-like whitewash. Built in the ninth century, and half destroyed when the Greeks recovered it in 1821, it was rebuilt in 1828. Yet by its glaring whiteness you might think it had first been constructed a hundred years later. Patras long ago erected another church over what it believes to be the corpse of Saint Andrew, its patron saint; but this it is fortunately too poor to whitewash.

Most of Patras is unpaved, and though it sprinkles its principal streets now and then, this merely makes mud in place of dust. There is rather dirty sea bathing from pile-raised shanties on the outer edge of town. Yet it is a more pleasant place than its rival, Piræus. Some beautiful squat palm-trees carry the mind back to southern California; broad stone steps lead to the upper town, with a medieval fortress, the better residences, a park with open-air movies. A two-story town for the most part, with a few old victorias still in use. Besides the constant influx of currant-raisins in season there are wagon-loads of dried hides, and of tins that once held gasoline, now filled with pitch. An outdoor café with music surrounds the lighthouse out at the end of the one pier, a pier so exactly in line with the ax-gash in the top of a mountainous island floating on the sea, away out in the more than blue bay, that one suspects it was pointed that way purposely.

A steamer was to leave at five sharp next morning for Corfu. Though we were far behind in our sleep, we left word to be called at four, since all the water-front warned us that we must be sure to be on board by four-thirty. For

some strange reason which I cannot now recall, we thought there might be a chance for a little real slumber in one of the hotels a short block back of the wharves. We chose a back room, as far as possible from the all-night hubbub which constitutes a Grecian summer night, and everything looked rosy, until about the time our heads hit the meager pillows.

During that sleepless night in Patras the artist threw a bottle at what he had every auditory reason to believe was an amorous cat, nay, a score of them, in the blind alley that ended below our window. As a former baseball pitcher still now and then inclined to boast of his last-century's prowess his aim was good. Not that he hit a cat, to be sure. That would have been too much to expect. But he did land perfectly upon the most prominent part of what proved forthwith to be a native trying to sleep on a cot.

However, I have already mentioned the delightful deportment of the Greeks toward strangers within their gates. With divine good nature this son of Hellas sprang from his bed and groped for what had struck him. To return it with interest? Not at all. Even before the artist was prepared to dodge, it was evident in the weak glare of an electric light at the far corner that his target had suddenly been imbued with the magnificent new idea of ridding the alleyway of cats. Which he did—for the time being. It was astonishing the number he rounded up, as he ran hither and yon brandishing the artist's bottle, before he hurled it at the scattering felines as they turned the corner in their temporary exodus. This modern Greek was dressed in a robe, by the way, like his ancient forebears—a night-robe, to be exact. But lack of length made it fall far short of the classically dignified garment of Diogenes or Socrates.

About that time it was four o'clock. We dragged ourselves around the corner to the water-front and sat down at one

of hundreds of café tables scattered along the wide unpaved front wall of Patras, all occupied already as far as we could see up and down the wharves. Wise people, the Greeks; they learned long ago that the prowling-time of cats is no time to try to sleep.

We sat there until five; we sat there until six. The screeching little trains that leave Patras early each morning for Kalamata and Athens respectively crawled away. We took turns watching our gear, piled on a rush-bottomed chair, while the other foraged for something resembling a breakfast. We took turns sitting while the other went for a stroll, to arrest the last stage of ennui. We picked up our gear and walked, as soon as the restaurants along the water-front began to spread cloths on the iron tables beneath their awnings. We ate; and at one in the afternoon the boat—another boat—came in. It seemed that, thanks to the genius for efficiency of the Greeks, the craft we were to have taken was about half loaded in Piræus the afternoon before, when some one discovered that it could not possibly hold all the freight awaiting shipment. So it had been unloaded, a larger steamer substituted, and here we were at last, at two in the afternoon, actually on our way to Corfu.

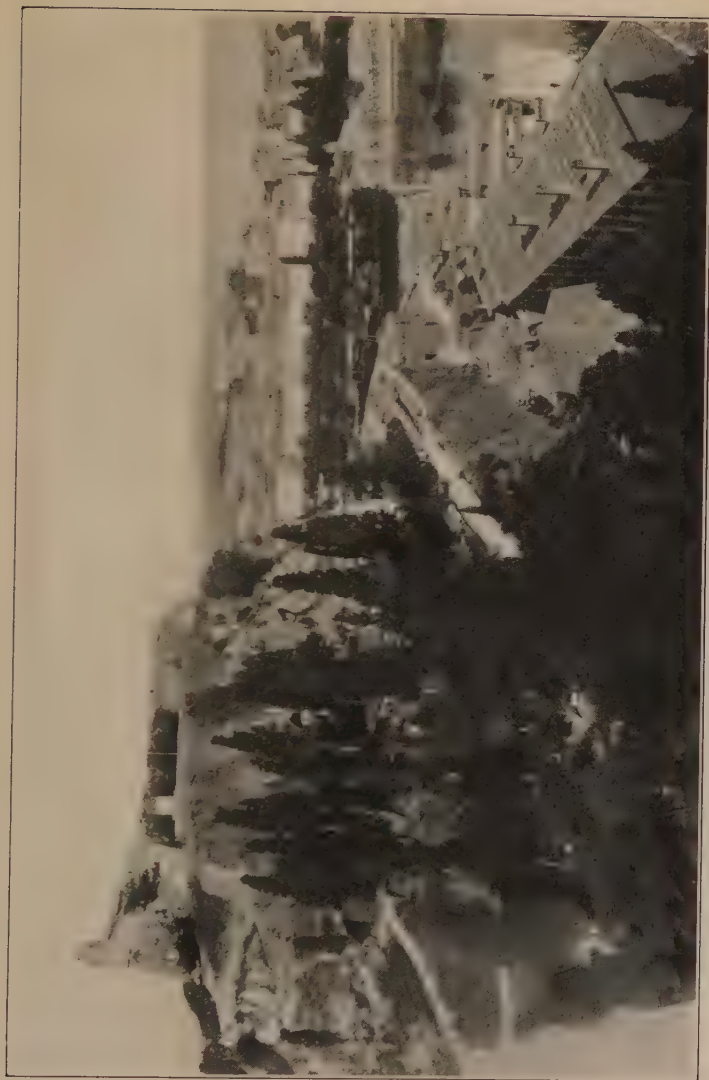
Soon afterward we passed Missolonghi, the Valley Forge of modern Greek independence, back of its swamp lake against a background of mountains. There, you may recall, Byron died of fever after moving over from Cephalonia, and thereby aroused the world to help the Greeks free themselves from the Turks. The mainland coast of Epirus shows the same treeless ash-heaps of mountains as the rest of Greece as seen from the sea. Yet it is a beautiful coast, now mauve, now gray, a panorama of almost naked mountains, villages tucked away high up in their laps, a monastery here and there on an apparently inaccessible peak, white or yel-

lowish patches of bare earth where the scrub trees have been scaled off entirely.

On the larboard side, Ithaca (accent on the second syllable, by the way, ye men of Cornell), almost under the wing of Cephalonia, piles up in mass formation, as mountainous as all Ionian and Ægean islands. The same old island on which Penelope waited for philandering Ulysses; except that here and there bits of it have fallen into the sea, as its sheer white cliffs show. Many towers, probably decapitated flour-grinding windmills, stand along the high crest of the island.

We landed at six in the morning, to find Corfu very quiet. For an hour we had been anchored before a signal brought scores of rowboats rushing out to fight for our slight patronage. The steamer was to go on to Brindisi, for this is the end of Greece. In fact, Corfu had an Italian air. We were singularly unnoticed there, no doubt because Corfu has so many foreign visitors. The men all had a hungry, ragged look, too, so that our disheveled appearance and breakfastless faces did not make us conspicuous—for by this time we were battered and spotted and faded with much rough travel. Barefooted, miserable-looking men, women, and children seemed to be in the majority, at least so early in the morning.

The city of Corfu, on the island the world knows by the same name (though to the Greeks both are Kérkyra), has many two- and three-story buildings, even some of four; but the plaster that covers them is largely fallen away or discolored. Most of its labyrinthine narrow old streets are paved with flagstones; not, however, the wider main thoroughfare, which is as innocent of paving as the water-front of Patras. Along this and some other streets, arcades front the buildings, and in the narrow ones the sun rarely gets a peep until noon. By then they are much less busy with traffic



Corfu is made doubly picturesque by its ancient fortress



A young Albanian waiting at Corfu for a sail-boat to



A genial gentleman from Albania, on the wharf at

from the country, some of it in old-fashioned costumes that are not the old costumes of Greece proper.

Though long held by Italy, not to mention other European powers, picturesque Corfu seems rather sleepy. But it is made doubly worth seeing by its ancient fortress, high on the inevitable rock hill, which in this case has been tunneled like Gibraltar by the British, who have so often held it. A courteous army officer at the outer end of the drawbridge invited me, in excellent French, in through the arched gateway even before I asked. Was I German? Ah, American! Then doubly welcome! He detailed a soldier to take me through the labyrinthine underground passages, to the tiptop of the fortress.

Most of Kérkyra, the top disclosed, is mountainous. The weather-darkened old town beyond the broad Spianata below, with space enough for ten café tables per inhabitant, is packed between this and a smaller "new" fortress, also centuries old. There is little distinction in the buildings, except age. But there are many trees, outside the compact old town itself. About the great curve of the bay clings the well-wooded suburb of Kastrades, the former royal residence of Mon Repos above it. White villages are scattered all along the semicircular landscape, some high up, even on top, none of any size at sea-level. The mountains of Albania stand out along the northern horizon. About the wharves may be seen some of the subjects of King Zogu, in their queer costumes of too tight waistcoats under too short jackets, too tight trousers above heavy hobnailed low shoes with turned-up toes, their heads covered by black or white skullcaps. Pretty little mediæval vessels now and then lift their sails and set out across the blue bay toward that tiny misplaced Moslem land under Italian tutelage.

There is an excellent hospital, other modern buildings,

inside the fortress; surprising, until you discover that the British built them. Below, the huge "royal palace" of more than one British High Commissioner is empty now but for the gymnasium (in the German sense, of course) occupying a part of it. The fortress moat is covered with boats, boys swimming in it. For that matter, there are bath-houses from which even stray visitors may enjoy splendid sea swimming, which seems to be both customary and safe here on the fringe of Italy.

In the shade of a great tree on the edge of another broad open space was a big gasoline engine run with verbal gas—by a man turning the huge fly-wheel for an artisan whose only shop is a booth beneath the trees. Near by, two men were cutting stone with a bucksaw. Carts with two huge wheels jolt down the flagstones. Peasant women half Italian in dress, in head-cloths of bright colors and hand-embroidered homespun aprons, clump along in their heavy footwear. Housewives argue before their doors with peddlers of vegetables and fruit, carried in two baskets astride a donkey, the vehemence of both suggesting that prices are as painfully high here as in other parts of this all too poverty-stricken world of ours. There is a museum, too, if you care to waste more time on the patched kitchen utensils of ancient Greece.

A hundred or more sailors from a big British war-ship out in the harbor were bathing in an inner cove. The artist, essentially a skeptic, refused to believe them English; thought for a while, from their lack of talk, so conspicuous in so chattering a land, that they were from a deaf-mute institution, until they finally exchanged a few brief words in that curiously flat, unaccented language of theirs, without the use of the hands. A sudden burst of band music from the battleship at noon reminded me that I had not heard a bar of good music in a camel's age.

The country scenes of Greece's northwest outpost are much like those on her other islands: small patches of cultivation among the mountains, tilled from villages, donkey-riding milkmen and women on their way to or from town, excellent peaches, American-style grapes, plums, figs, cactus-apples. The British are responsible for the good roads on which buses or automobiles for hire will carry you to almost any of the villages. Half an hour by auto-bus will bring you to Achilleion, where the Kaiser sat on a saddle and declared the World War. His elaborate un-Grecian Corfu palace is now a museum, a relic, with an admission fee. There are some very ambitious statues and pictures, but . . . well, you may see their like in the Tiergarten at Berlin.

In Corfu I saw an excellent example of what living on an island means, a sample of a sturdy young boatman's day. He came out at dawn to solicit passengers; got the two of us; hung about us all morning, speaking a fair Italian. He took us to a place where we could buy return tickets to Patras, to a restaurant at lunch-time, where he acted as interpreter and got a glass of wine from the proprietor for bringing him business. He saw us through the capitania of the port; finally rowed us out to the afternoon steamer for Patras—and thanked us profusely for a twenty-seven-cent fee and a seven-cent tip. That this was much more than he normally earned in a day was evident from his attitude, from some of his remarks. Yet it was just as plain that he did not loaf because he was satisfied with so slight an income but because in the general struggle for existence of the crowded islanders he literally could not find any other work that day; would have been like the dog that dropped his bone for the reflection of it he saw in the water, had he left our heels.

CHAPTER XXVII

ABOUT THE BAY OF CORINTH

THE Peloponnesus railway saunters all the way around the peninsula and back to Corinth, with two trains a day each way, unusual for the Near East. In one place, called the "Little Dardanelles," the azure Gulf of Corinth is only a mile and a quarter wide, with a Venetian fort, extensive but now dilapidated, on each side. Nafpaktos, in plain sight across the bay, is picturesque on its climbing hillside, flanking walls of the old fortress on its acropolis stretching down like motherly arms and surrounding the half-ruined, entrancing-at-a-distance town below.

Otherwise, currant fields backed by mountains, which here and there come down so close to the water that they squeeze the life out of the vineyards. Still farther on, upon the northern nose of the peninsula which the Canal of Corinth makes an island, mountains which bring their pine-trees down to the water's edge with them push the railway to the very brink of the bay, into it in places; for retaining walls and iron bridges are all that sustain us. Sail-boats of many rigs dot the blue gulf, and the mountains across it pile up in great irregular heaps culminating in Parnassus.

It was almost a perfect Sunday, our last one together in Greece, the final day of July. For once we had slept well the night before, on the deck and a tool-chest respectively, of the good ship *Byzantium*. There had been time to stroll to the station along the already sprinkler-muddied water-

front of Patras to the early train, with tea or coffee and rolls on the way. A pleasant two-hours ride along the Gulf of Corinth, with engaging views, interesting types of Sunday excursionists. At Diakofto . . . five hours before a train was to climb the cog-wheel line to Kalavryta. We might have walked and been there sooner. But even a rushing New York artist can in time be taught the wisdom of taking his pleasures in the leisurely fashion of the Near East. So for once we decided to be Greek and patient and contented. Breakfast at the open-air restaurant at Diakofto station; a promise of lunch there before train-time. Then we strolled the half-mile to the gulf.

A not too stony beach, sandy farther out; the bluest water, of perfect temperature for a lazy day; Parnassus, capped in clouds, no less, across the bay; inland, the gaping gorge up which the little cog-wheel line climbs. Lovely sea and magnificent mountain scenery all about; grapes within easy reach; a cluster of high reeds to give shade and protection from curious eyes, if any, yet not thick enough to cut off the breeze; a stream of clear fresh water right down from the mountains, for drinking and washing one's clothes. It was no task at all to borrow a cake of yellow soap from a woman in one of the cluster of reed-and-board bathing-huts farther along the beach, so high is the reputation for probity of English-speaking travelers. Breeze and slashing sunshine dry clothes in a twinkling; and we were far enough from any one to be able to swim naked, as nature meant man, and woman, to swim. Then a stroll back to lunch at one, before the cog-wheel railway shows a sign of life at two.

But the Greeks will see to it that a man shall not long enjoy perfection. Two cars, like chicken boxes, with walls only half-way up, but twice as many passengers as hard seats, so that we had to get aboard long before the train started

and stew and crowd and jostle and wait, out of reach of the breeze and in the full blaze of the red-hot sun. This time it was a woman who spoke to us in English, a most unusual experience. Either Greeks do not take their wives to the United States, or give them no chance to learn English there; or they never let them come back. Or, again, is it merely that the Turkish point of view which still reigns over Hellas does not permit a woman to speak to strange men, whatever their American abilities?

The rack-and-pinion train of two half-open boxes groaned away at last up a gorge of sheer reddish composite cliffs, along a stream brawling even in midsummer. Through several tunnels, one with an iron gate, around which pedestrians can pass only by scrambling an hour or more over the perpendicular mountain; so we were lucky as well as wise to have decided to be Greeks that Sunday. The crowd chatters incessantly all the way. The "American" in this case is a barber from Holyoke, who jokes, in English, naturally, at the whiskers of the solemn monk beside us. Considers him an enemy of his calling, no doubt. Two youths take turns playing a huge mandolin; ponderous peasants stare at us strange beings from the other world. The water has carved fantastic figures in relief on the sheer reddish cliffs, worn them into queer shapes; caves have become little wells from centuries of dripping water.

At the station for Megaspelæon, looking up to mountains on every hand, we descended. The train goes on to Kalavryta, a summer-resort place, of no interest to sight-seeing foreigners. But one of the sights of Greece is the monastery of "Great Cave," to translate it, occupying an immense cavern at the base of a mighty mountain cliff. The near-precipice up which we climbed like chamois, for an hour that seemed much longer, soon brought us within sight of it, a reddish-

gray cliff perhaps a hundred and fifty sheer feet high, with a score of structures, that are also one, covering the irregular cave at the bottom.

Picturesque at a distance, but certainly not beautiful either there or close at hand, that huge human swallows' nest plastered against the foot of the imposing cliff, so close to it that when Ibrahim Pasha won the little fortress on the heights above and tried to drop rocks upon the monastery they overreached it and did no harm. So close under the cliff that the sun hardly touches it before noon, which is all very fine, in summer; and of course Greek winters are short, to say nothing of whiskers and monks' gowns, and mammoth piles of firewood, recalling the monasteries among Korea's Diamond Mountains.

The lower stories of the great structure built flat against the base of the cliff are of stone, with flimsier ones above, ramshackle wooden houses once painted blue, pink, green, on which sun and rain have long wrought their havoc, with only rare makeshift repairs. Yet the whole establishment is all in one piece, like some medieval skyscraper, gaping with hundreds of windows, an irregular skyscraper, six to twelve stories, as if medieval building laws were fantastic. Down in front, on swiftly sloping ground, little terraced gardens in which the monks amuse themselves for exercise; outdoor beehive-shaped ovens, of baked mud. A magnificent view in two directions, that from the top of the monastery rock equal to Switzerland.

Three thousand feet above the Gulf of Corinth, with plenty of trees, running water, Megaspelæon is always cool. The cradle of Greek independence, this huge cliff-pasted old monastery might be called. For it was a center of revolt during every effort to throw off the Turkish yoke. Once Megaspelæon was very rich, owned real estate not only in Greece

but in Constantinople, in Smyrna. But it has of course lost all its holdings in the Turkey of to-day, and the Greek Government has taken away its lands and town houses nearer home. So that now some forty instead of two hundred monks potter about their little terraced gardens, forty old or aging monks in the usual state of no wash, going through what to the impious laymen seem childish ceremonies, at the banging of bells or the pounding with a mallet of a great slab of dry wood hanging out over space from an upper balcony. Once many monks were always absent, away collecting rents, supervising workers; but to-day both the excuse and the wherewithal to leave home are lacking.

Women may come to Megaspelæon if they wish; the public is freely admitted, within limits. There is a modern tourist hotel a bit removed from the famous old structure. But it was our luck, good or bad, to find all its rooms occupied. For Megaspelæon is a favorite summer resting-place, with plenty of "Americans" and guests from the other lands of Europe. However, as Parisian a supper as anywhere in Greece—for me. The end of that perfect day found the artist on his back, capable of only tea and toast. It was more romantic, of course, to be put up in one of the monastery guest-rooms, as were all visitors in bygone centuries. True, the bewhiskered old fellow who attended us, between services, did not know the meaning of sheets. But even without them that was a sleep long to be remembered. For three thousand feet of elevation was just enough to make a blanket welcome, and evidently too high for those myriad little devils of which Greek monastery beds are often possessed.

Next morning we wandered more or less at random within the monastery, a veritable rabbit warren of dark narrow wooden stairs groaning with age and leading to queer little bewhiskered rooms that might be called cells if the right to



Patras, second port of Greece



The monastery of Megaspelæon is built over and takes its name from an immense cave at the base of a mighty mountain cliff

have personal belongings at Megaspelæon had not stuffed them with all manner of old junk masquerading as furniture, pictures, odds and ends of monkish garb, sacred relics of which the trash-can had long been cheated. All these rooms, and the little gardens, too, were securely padlocked during the absence of the occupants.

Not much art, as we understand it, among the quaint paintings on walls and the sides of pillars. In the dark chapel is a Virgin and Child, black with centuries of candle smoke, which the Greeks will tell you was painted by Saint Luke himself; Megaspelæon's chief treasure. Pilgrims still come to bow down before it, even in this materialistic age. The altar in the cave itself suggested the holy of holies of our caveman ancestors.

A dark library with one small window and no light, unless you bring a candle, is said to contain many famous books. But to-day books mean little to Greek monks. Much more to the point are the great tuns of wine farther back in the cavern, behind the altar. A man whose duty it is brings out bursting wine-skins, and each monk gets a pitcherful, a lump of coarse bread, twice every day, unless it be a fast-day. True, you cannot accuse them of overindulgence in the fleshpots of life; but most of them would probably rather loaf than eat well.

To most of us such a life would be a living death. The monks send out no missionaries, furnish no preachers, give no advice to the people, do no studying, write no books, attend no sick, offer no education . . . do nothing, except to go through their services, monotonously, in harsh and droning voices, an attitude of total indifference. Yet the sad, yearning expression on some of the pallid faces, especially of those still bordering on youth, suggests that with some of them it may be as it would be with us. The great majority

have risen above this, however, to perfect contentment in doing nothing.

Back to Diakofto and on along the blue Bay of Corinth, dotted with sail-boats. Almost snow-white soil in places; yet currant-grapes and olives thrive. Great cliffs washed into fantastic shapes, equal but for color to those of La Paz; the waters of the gulf have been changing the shape of this coast since ancient days, washing down soil to form more olive orchards and vineyards, forever building out the shore. Parnassus, hooded in clouds, always just across from us, seeming to move with us. We had hoped to get across the bay from Ægion to Itea, but even sail-boats were too expensive for mere non-laborers. Thousands of rather small . . . cypresses I have been calling them; the Greeks say cyuparisi, and gather from them a nut from which they boil a hair tonic (as if they needed any!) and use the wood for boat-building. Many new red-tiled houses along the edge of the gulf; prosperity and increase in population and comfort seem to continue the world over.

Earthquakes followed me through the Near East, without overtaking me. Jerusalem, Nablus, a dozen towns of Palestine were badly shaken soon after I left them. The whole region of the eastern Mediterranean had for some time been doing a dance of destruction. Corinth had already had due warning, though it went unheeded, as warnings usually do. Hundreds of its houses were soon to fall, leaving thousands homeless. But to-day it languished unsuspecting in its whitish adobe homes without the enlivening touch of a single tree.

Out to Old Corinth, then, where a number of striking remains are to be found, and up the gray jagged granite hill of Acro-Corinth, its top surrounded by a mammoth medieval wall. But leave all that to the archæologists; school-boy babble on profound subjects means nothing. The café beneath the

huge trees of the old village below seemed to be used to visitors. Boys playing, as boys will, with the iron mining-cars of the now absent American School of Archæology. An important job, the unearthing of ancient Corinth, no doubt, even if the layman finds it hard to see that much has been accomplished of real value to the world, as with so many jobs we do not understand.

The artist did not climb Parnassus; perhaps artists do not. The fever was upon him, toll of the incessant Grecian summer sun. Yet he would have none of my mothering; preferred that of the kindly ex-American who runs the Corinth hotel; insisted I go on. The auto-bus into which I had bought my way under the trees of Old Corinth, crowding into the driver's seat already holding three passengers, was filled with wealthy Greeks of both sexes from Egypt, summering at Lutrake. We snorted on into the night, crossed the Canal of Corinth by full moon, several cars on a crude two-man-power ferry, a steamer passing within hand-shake of us as we started. Lutrake is long and very narrow, on a little strip of coast cut out from under high cliffs. Beach restaurants far above the Greek average; an Atlantic City atmosphere. Rich people come here for the summer, the ailing also; for the sickly lukewarm water of Lutrake's springs dissolves gallstones, so they say. Two glasses of water and three baths a day is the standard treatment; the baths alone should help. An American citizen I fell in with said he had got rid of his gallstones in ten days; as I had none to try it on, I can only report hearsay. There is another place in Greece where natural hot water cures rheumatism; but as I have been denied that also . . .

Certainly there had been no lack of "Americans" that day. A truck-driver from Nevada had come down from Megaspelæon with us, and there had been others on the way

to Corinth. The automobile owner whose fare to Acro-Corinth I had declined once lived in Chicago. The same price you have to pay in the United States seems highway robbery in the Near East. I had walked—or run—for the sun was getting low. Shouted at a raisin-drier along the way, who as promptly shouted back in Americanese. In the new village of Old Corinth I called out an inquiry to the first man seen, lolling in the shade of his house, and he replied in the same language. You get so used to it that you are inclined to be peevish if any one does not instantly respond in your own tongue.

At the café table beneath the trees of Old Corinth almost the first man I spoke to, though a peasant in garb and manner, turned out to have been a fireman on the Burlington, sixteen years back. He resurrected his sixteen-years-dead English with some difficulty; mentioned that he still regrets the "lost papers" which make his return impossible. He, however, had no idea of the wages paid to-day in the United States; his mind was still back in the dollar-a-day age; and to him men who return to Greece with their absurd stories of labor's rewards across the sea are mere liars.

On the bus there had been one of those educated speakers of English, from Egypt, who can say so little compared with the fluent but ungrammatical "Americans." At Lutrake he sent a boy with me to a steamer agency, which of course had no steamer to Itea that night. Being naturally slow on the up-take, I was worrying over the problem of how to continue my travels, when a man born at Itea walked in and mentioned another agency. He owned a candy store in Newark, had gone to the United States at sixteen, had just landed on his first trip home, aged thirty-seven. Beginning as a dish-washer, he had during the first ten years had to work so hard he "could not even go to night-school."

Yet here he was, twenty years later, quite a passable gentleman, and a free spender.

But he had become so completely Americanized that he rushed nervously at everything he did, ate in that abominable American quick-lunch manner I had almost forgotten and longed never to see again. He no longer knew even how to drink wine; swallowed it whole, in the primitive American fashion. It was not yet nine when we sat down to an outdoor dinner on the wave-slapped beach. Some one had told us the boat would come at ten. The candy-man had been so long away that he took Greek time-tables seriously. Yet at that there was ample time to eat and drink like gentlemen. But he danced about, wolfed food and wine, refused to sit still for fear the boat would come in ahead of time—an impossible feat for any Greek form of transportation. Really, I prefer the rattling of beads. I had not realized how much of our nerve-racking American rush I had sloughed off during half a year of meandering about the eastern Mediterranean.

The steamer actually came at eleven-thirty, and was not off again until midnight. We might almost have caught it had our meal only started when it arrived. It carried several other returned "Americans," of a somewhat earlier vintage; and the candy-man was still Greek enough to sit up the four hours between Lutrake and Itea, babbling with them incessantly.

We landed before dawn. Among us were a man and a woman with rucksacks and no human language, apparently. The Greeks could not understand why I, also a foreigner, could not talk with them. They turned out to be Czechoslovaks, according to their passport; had Turkish coffee with a score of other passengers at iron tables along the graveled . . . esplanade, shall we say? Then they were off toward Delphi, on foot in the darkness.

I, too, can still command myself in a Spartan manner; but I have outlived the youthful habit of doing so merely for the doing. Instead, I went home with two ex-Americans, to catch a wink of sleep. The older man's wife and children were up to greet him, though it was still an hour or more to dawn. He offered me the mattressed floor of the house, the family bed, but I preferred one of the rug-covered platforms out in the little yard. Early-worm roosters and dogs disliking the American scent may not have made so absolutely continuous an uproar as I thought.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CLIMBING PARNASSUS

THE postal bus carried me off at eight. First across the vast forest of immemorial, ever-fruitful olive-trees on the Itea plain, which one tribe has endeavored to wrest from another all down through history. Nero, whom you surely remember, divided this beautiful plain among his soldiers. Then, what a climb! As we tore around one hair-pin turn, invisible ten feet ahead, after another, with mighty chasms six inches from the outer wheels and nowhere the sign of a guard-rail, I thanked his stars the artist was not along, offered up vicarious praise that he lay with fever, if it was still with him, across the bay in Corinth.

We could, by the way, see Corinth, with the ever-growing view of mountains on every hand, close about us, across the blue gulf in Arcadia, on down toward Epirus, while the great green orchard of the Itea plain dwindled to an exquisite Oriental rug in the slanting morning sunshine. Through Cherso, ancient Krisa, destroyed a little while ago (585 B. C.) because it was in the habit of plundering pilgrims to the shrine at Delphi. Still does so, when the chance offers . . . but we look more genially on the looting of tourists than did the ancient Greeks.

Then the considerable town of Kastri, which still prefers to call itself Delphus, on the brink of a vast canyon, where it was moved bodily by the French from on top of ancient Delphi. Ruins of the excavated oracle-place right beside the

highway, above and below it; though the best of them, the Sacred Precinct, are not within sight from a bus. But all that could wait; just now I was Parnassus bound, which meant riding on up to Arachova.

There's a mountain village redolent of ancient Greece, and a town worth seeing withal. I know of no other so nearly like what I imagine the towns of Leonidas's day to have been. High up on the flanks of Parnassus, Arachova is a thoroughly mountain town in all its aspects: steep, stony, often slimy streets, quaint old costumes, bull-headed inhabitants, a town hanging on the edge of an immense gorge, its stone buildings piled up the hillside at an angle no owner of loose wares would dare to imitate. The heavy-footed, hard-headed mountain villagers in semi-ancient costumes take visitors for granted, without welcome. Every woman of Arachova seems to spend every spare moment, whether sitting or walking, spinning into yarn the wool of the family sheep, precisely as do the Indian women of the Andes, potato as bobbin and all.

Perhaps this was the spinning season, for the women seem to do plenty of weaving, too: homespun garments for themselves, in many colors, blankets, bags, and the like for those visitors who simply must carry home souvenirs. I have no trunk-filling instinct. But my sailing date was near; this stuff was the simon-pure unmitigated wool, just as the sheep wears it, hair-shirt quality and all, though in no sheepish colors. I have a wife who is anything but exacting; yet it is not well to take too much for granted. I bought some bags, and a blanket.

The blanket seemed quite warm enough for New Year's Eve at the North Pole, and high as Arachova is I never dreamed I might need it in Greece. Yet at rare intervals I have perfectly lucid moments, foresight worthy a thought-



A woman of Kalyvia Arachovina, engaged in the spare-time occupation of the mountainous region at the foot of Parnassus



In the summer, when crops are worth stealing, sleeping platforms spring up in all the fertile parts of Greece



The awesome gorge at Delphi is one of the sights of Greece



The men of Arachova do not buy their pitchforks in a shop, any more than the women do the family garments

less child of ten. I decided to lug that blanket up Parnassus with me. Of course no true devotee of what Parnassus stands for, even in its most prosaic form, would think of blankets and the abode of the Muses in the same breath, in the same week. But show me the man who ever heard me boasting any relationship with the Muses.

There are "Americans" even in Arachova, naturally. But that morning I happened to meet instead an Australian woman, caught for life in this dreary mountain town. Dirty and patched and mountain-minded as the native women, her children quite like their playmates—if mountain children ever play. She had married, back in Australia, the keeper of Arachova's sad general store. He spoke the English of the Antipodes almost as well as she; yet they were both as short on real understanding as Andean Indians. A sad predicament for a woman almost of our own race. But I suppose we must all take our living where we can find it.

The commonplace matter of food was a problem. "Lent" had begun on August first and was to last for fifteen days, over the Virgin Mary's birthday. The mountaineers are strict observers. No meat, not even eggs, during that fortnight. Whatever else the Australian's sad shelves, or all the town, for that matter, offered, promised no banquet on the summit of Parnassus. Two hours of vain endeavor to poke a hole through the grocer-interpreter's mental density. Better luck alone, for I managed at length to get a bootleg lamb stew as a midday bracer, to be consumed on the non-public spot. Then a man sneaked in with some eggs; another and another came, until I had to call a halt. Even the pious are glad of a market at such an egg-forbidden time; and what matter to them if I threw away my chances of getting to heaven? A half loaf of peasant's bread—only a stronger man could carry

a whole one—some cheese, goat's-hair and all, perhaps something else; I disremember, though I was keen enough on the stock inventory at the time.

Now pile all this on your back and set out at the hottest hour up the almost perpendicular rivulet of rolling stones above Arachova and you may imagine yourself trying a sample of the worst trails the Andes have to offer. An army canteen is small; it is designed for sham battles half a mile from a hot-dog stand. Obviously, a supply to be husbanded. Grapes the first mile or two above the town, but hopelessly green; picking time comes much later away up here. Arachova had declined to furnish me a guide; said, in so many drachmas, that no one would carry my load to the top of Parnassus on what religion permitted their stomachs at that season. Also every man Demosthenes of them assured me I could not possibly find the way alone; that I should infallibly lose myself and die of thirst, exposure, starvation. Cold forsooth! Drops dripped from the end of my nose.

White granite peaks all about me; by mid-afternoon the delightful smell of an old pine forest, growing in almost solid rock. White clouds fleeing overhead, casting passing black shadows, like lurking bandits. The Greeks say that nine days out of ten Parnassus clouds itself in mist, through which no stranger can find his way. Mere luck that I had chosen the tenth day. For the first few steep miles there were tiny stony farms here and there, though no other signs of mankind. Then utter solitude, hour after hour, with the going like scrambling forever up myriad church steeples roofed in razor-edged stone.

A guide might have kept to the path; I certainly could not. The last few miles that day were by imaginary compass, so straight up that hands were more useful than feet, the air so thin that a rest was imperative every hundred yards. No

wonder the ancient Greeks honored the man who reached the heights of Parnassus. Or was it Pegasus? Night fell in earnest well below the summit, if summit there was. Not an ounce of push left in my thighs. I sank down in the nearest thing to a sheltering hole, which was no shelter whatever. At best a peg on which to hang myself until morning.

The wind that would fain have carried me off into Thes-saly howled with the mournfulness of the bottomless pit. The heat of climbing evaporated like water on a red-hot stove. Shivering racked me. I put on every garment I had carried on my Grecian travels, pajamas and all; drew the knapsack over my head, wrapped the Arachova blanket about me. Seventeen of them would have been insufficient. Could this be Greece, and summertime? I wolfed some of the hard-won provisions; could easily have eaten them all then and there. The pilgrims to Mecca I had traveled with down from Damascus, who carried great goatskin sacks of water, were right: my canteen was a toy, to be laughed at with Arab uproariousness. Eskimos and arctic explorers indeed! I dare Bob Bartlett himself to spend a night on Parnassus. Well, at least there were no dogs and roosters and shrieking Greek cafés. And for months I had longed for a cool night. If only the wind would lay off trying to snatch away the gossamer blanket long enough for one hand or one foot to rest a little. Even at that there would have been no sleep on Parnassus. No doubt the Muses would consider themselves flouted.

Years afterward, when the first faint hint of dawn crept along the distant horizon, far below, I hoisted myself erect, gathered my belongings, propelled myself gradually upward. An hour of superhuman struggling, nearly a mile, perhaps, and I stood erect on the summit. How the house-sized jagged white rocks withstood the wind was a mystery. A view never to be forgotten, but a more pressing matter was how to cling

tightly enough to something to keep from being swept off into it. And was this the top? Other jagged rock pinnacles equally high lay about me. Ah, well, Parnassus has several summits, and to have climbed even one . . .

The first two or three hours of descent were if anything more muscle-torturing than the climb. Once or twice, perhaps three times, I was hopelessly lost. Voices from stony little cultivated patches rescued me. Peasant women, hard at work; some peasant men waiting for the energy to join them. Lost again, and once again. More voices, this time of wood-choppers, whose pack-saddled donkeys browsed almost in vain among the pine-trees. Finally a trail, intangible, yet not too elusive for extreme vigilance. Some shepherds, right out of Homer. Warmth, heat again. I stripped, got into summer garb, ate what was left—not a drop of water this side of some distant village—toiled on again under what had once more become a burdensome pack.

Suddenly there appeared, still far below, the village on a little upland plain which I had seen at a distance on the way up. It is called Kalyvia Arachovina, and there the people of Arachova go, a long stony climb up Parnassus, for three or four months in the year, to raise wheat. During harvest and threshing season they fill to overflowing the rude stone huts. That morning, when I came out high above it, there were at least a dozen sets of horses, in some cases as many as ten in a string, jogging round and round the plate-shaped threshing floors.

The stone huts have earth floors, Spartan accommodations, only a little more evidence of a knowledge of minimum comforts than the most isolated descendants of the Incas. But the first hut yielded a man who had been for five years a furnace-worker in Kansas City, eight years back. So I got

water, nay, good unpitched country wine, and something resembling food. Women gathered, never for an instant ceasing their eternal yarn-spinning, the feminine spare-time occupation of all this hardy mountainous region. The Paques in the flesh.

A man who had been for years a prisoner in Germany came over from his threshing, smiling broadly at this chance of showing off his particular linguistic attainment before the villagers, who gasped flatteringly at my ability to understand both the village travelers. To the ex-prisoner I looked like a verdamter Deutscher, though the adjective evidently had no unsmiling meaning to him. The man from Kansas City scornfully corrected his mistake. Never were countrymen more friendly; in fact, in the end I wished they had been less so. But let us face troubles only when we get to them; as Trader Horn might have said, you should not harrow the reader until it is harrowing time.

When most of the villagers had been photographed, I was free to push on. The direct trail to Delphi lay across the now stubbly wheat-lands, over that bare whitish rocky mountain beyond. A youth who was eating at the mouth of a stone den offered to pilot me, according to the man from Missouri, as soon as he overtook me. Threshing under the hoofs of horses went steadily on. The women could keep it up, even if the astonishing event of a man from the other world forced their sons and husbands to lay down their whips and pitchforks. The men of Kalyvia Arachovina, the summer-season abode of Arachova, buy their pitchforks in no shop, by the way, any more than the women do their yarn or the family garments. They grow them, like the peasants of China. Home-made wooden shovels, with which to toss the threshed grain up into the breeze beneath the brilliant wheat-drying sun. There were

some fine cattle on that lofty plain, India bulls in their family tree, one suspected. But the horses were nothing to write home about.

My descent from Parnassus might have been lightened by the youth of Arachova who overtook me at the farther edge of the plain. He drove before him a mule laden with sacks of wheat; insisted on hitching my knapsack to the pack-saddle. But for the new blanket my belongings would not have been any load at all, so perhaps it was the blanket that brought me misfortune. The youth was friendliness personified. We managed to converse a little in monosyllables and gestures, aided by the common understanding of the experienced on the road and out of doors. Three very stony hours brought us to a spring of delicious ice-cold water bubbling out of the barren hillside, with a series of eight hollowed-log troughs, one above the other. The woman who was washing very dirty clothing there was Greek, however, and naturally was using the uppermost trough.

Then all at once we came out sheer above the ruins of Delphi, in perfect bird's-eye panorama. The road down into it could not have been steeper, more stony, especially with the soles of one's shoes completely gone. Cyprus had done that once for them; Parnassus repeated the disaster. Yet there is no better way than this to come upon the ancient site of the oracle, from sheer above, so that not only the ruins but all the region is seen like a vast relief map. The awesome rock gorge at Delphi is one of the noblest sights of Greece, staggering, far beyond the meager attainments of the camera. I wept for the artist, and for myself, never able to see what he would have made of this sublime scene. No wonder the old Greeks were superstitious about that appalling cleft in the flanks of Parnassus.

In a lap of stony mountains across the vast savage chasm,

with a terrible trail struggling up to it, was the large town of Desfina (or Delfina; my companion had a Winston Churchill lisp). We could see all the wild setting of the ancient oracle, on a rock ledge of the great gorge which spreads out to engulf the olive-green plain of Itea, the whole Bay of Corinth, the mountains of Morea, all the roofs of the transferred town of Kastri, all the range up which labored the more than zigzag, the veritable snake's trail to Delfina, and look back upon the mountains above and beyond us to Parnassus, all its peaks now hidden by the foreground. A most terrific descent, leaving the toes jammed, the thighs aching with the incessant sudden slamming on of the brakes.

To cut short a long, sad, and after all unimportant story of minor personal misfortune: I got to Kastri a little ahead of the youth and his mule. Two feet are preferable to four on such a descent. In the narrow streak of shade on one side of the main street I found respite from the torrid sunshine; was taken by some boys to a kind of restaurant owned by a former American. I had understood that the youth was bound to Kastri, or Delphus, as he called it, which is the same thing. Many years with baggage-carriers in undeveloped parts of the earth left it for granted that he would look me up and hand over my belongings, take his hire, perhaps, though he had not hinted payment. But when an hour was gone, misgivings crept in, tales of trusting travelers robbed of their belongings by chance native helpers, which hitherto had seemed mere slander.

The "American" bade me stop worrying; the youth must have halted at the home of a friend until the midday heat had abated, would presently awaken from his siesta and look me up. Another hour; I could have enjoyed a nap myself, but there were things in that knapsack which I did not care to lose. I set out to canvass the town, tried to hire

a native to do so more thoroughly. Word of my quest reached the police station; the chief himself, in civilian garb, came out to offer his help as I passed. Could it be that the youth had turned to thieving? Nonsense, spoke up a passer-by; he had gone on down to the mill at the bottom of the gorge.

The policeman assigned to help me, and the schooled but untraveled son of the keeper of the Delphi museum, who had volunteered as interpreter, led the way down the gorge wall. On my now swollen soleless feet that descent was more painful than the whole Parnassus excursion; and at the mill, Homeric with its running-water power, the miller awoke from his siesta to say that the youth had reloaded his ground wheat and gone back to Arachova!

There was nothing for it but to charter an automobile—though the only one just then available in Kastri was a new Cadillac, prices according—and give the policeman and the alleged interpreter the outing of their lives, in a mad dash up the winding precipice road to Arachova. There the once-Australian shopkeeper expressed his astonishment at seeing me again, alive; the man who had sold me bags and blanket was certain I had come back for more. Eventually the youth was run to earth on a garret cot. No, he had no intention of stealing my belongings; he just hadn't known what to do with them. The school English of my interpreter was a useless probe with which to fathom the workings of the Arachovina mind, and as worthless a weapon through which to fire the few choice words I longed to leave with the youth from Kalyvia.

The time left before sunset was not so much as the ruins of Delphi merit from the least archæo-minded. The old half-fallen theater, in which an ancient Greek play ("Prometheus Unbound," if I remember rightly) had recently been given before ten thousand spectators at the expense of a Grecian-

ized American heiress, would alone have been worth all of it. Picture those ten thousand in that theater, too; for the famous amphitheater at Delphi is no Metropolitan. The ruins are piled up at the foot of sheer gray rock cliffs, such as surround all the ancient place of the oracle. I had seen the stadium so clearly in coming down upon the famous site that it was not necessary to see it again. But there was the museum and, down across the highway, other things worth more than glancing over. And the shades of night were falling fast. So much the worse for a man so stupid as not to keep in constant contact with his infernal baggage. Nemesis, perhaps, at last. If only we could go back and pick up the dropped stitches in the knitting of life! Ah, well, at least I had seen enough to let the imagination play on what Delphi must have been with all its buildings, statues, architectural and sculptural masterpieces intact; to wonder how many thousand statues, equal or superior to the few housed in the roadside museum, are gone now.

So I rode, instead of walking, down to Itea, with a car-load of Kastri jeunesse more or less dorée delighted at this chance for a free moonlight excursion. The milkiest of Milky Ways. A ride more delightful, and more harrowing, in the soft Grecian half-lighted night than the hair-raising ascent by day.

The steamer did not come in until after midnight. I slept, perhaps, on a park bench along the water-front. Others, less resembling park-bench bums than I, did likewise. Soon, asleep again on the hard deck; how quickly you can reaccustom yourself to minor hardships, almost enjoy them. Through the Canal of Corinth by bright morning sun. If Greek steamers kept to their schedules, it would have been by moonlight, but that was to come later, too, though I did not then suspect it.

Then back to honking, sweltering Athens once more, though August there is evidently not quite so hot as June. The artist was not only recovered but was shaved and bathed and pressed, quite as far as an artist should be. His best friends would hardly have known him. Soon he was to be off for Scotland, where he would probably fit into the landscape, or at least into the culinary arrangements, better than here. All summer he had longed for rain—and from the day he landed in Marseilles until he sailed from Glasgow for the land of happy Greeks it poured almost incessantly.

CHAPTER XXIX

A LONELY JOURNEY TO CRETE

I TOPPED off my Grecian interlude with a moonlight sail to the classic isle of Crete, alone. The artist was moonlighting on the Acropolis, bidding the Parthenon a last sad farewell before sailing on the morrow for the heathery land from which came his ability to economize, sometimes. In the not too early morning I awoke on a deck bench to find our Egypt-bound steamer within sight of Greece's largest island. The range of barren, almost completely deforested mountains was different from other Greek isles only in that it stretched from horizon to horizon. For Crete is fifty miles long.

Unfortunately, two thirds of its 3326 square miles are sterile rock. The deforesting of past centuries has left it little but bare mountain slopes, down which the rare rains roar quickly into the sea, carrying with them any arable particle of earth they meet on the way. Hence most of the men have gone to the United States or elsewhere, and women and children and the old and the infirm make up much of the population. Yet 350,000 people find a livelihood of some sort on Crete, and thousands of them consider it the nearest approach to an earthly paradise.

About nine we stopped outside a tiny harbor of horseshoe shape, not large enough even for such small steamers as ours. Among the swarms of boatmen who came out to us were two blacks, the first and last negroes I ever saw in Greece. Once,

under the Turks, hundreds of them were brought over from Africa. Canea, second port and capital of Crete, must have been very Turkish before the island was restored to Greece in 1913. There are still several minarets, many graceful old domes, queer old houses in queer old streets, even hubble-bubbles in the cafés. A coffee-house spreads far and wide beneath a huge old plane-tree, from which a chorus of crickets perpetually promises rain; any one who has seen Crete knows they are lying, or at least mistaken. Hot as all Grecian coast towns, was Canea; yet there were patches of snow on the near-by mountaintops, though it was already August.

Motor-buses run out early and often to Khalepa, a suburb at the base of Akrotiri Peninsula, long the best residential section; and it cost me precisely two cents to be set down exactly in front of the home of Venizelos. The "Grand Old Man of Greece"—except to the royalists and the partizans, if any are left, of Pangalos—was overseeing the restoration of the home and garden-orchard of his fathers (or fathers-in-law), which he then thought was to serve as his last residence. Meanwhile the little more than a bungalow in which he lived at the end of the bus line was an astonishingly simple home for so famous a man. Our interview was short; in fact, his first words were the assurance that he would not be interviewed, which spared me the embarrassment of saying that I could not stay long enough for such a formality even were I given to interviewing.

But everything in its place. First, a brief general chat, in English, with the former and future premier's secretary in a tight little office-studio crammed with many evidences of scholarly tastes. Then the sudden appearance of a man dressed in white, a still hale and hearty gentleman of scanty white hair and snow-white beard, looking very much like a college professor on his vacation, or in retirement. A smiling

reply to my first query, that on the whole he preferred to converse in French rather than in English. A stroll through part of the grounds of the ancestral home, impersonal now in the throes of extensive repairs; a kodak portrait, another for safety's sake, before an influx of friends and callers, some of them obviously politicians direct from Athens, with important things to say, or hear, sent me back to the two-cent bus. Besides, my steamer was not to remain long.

Plainly a man with a certain not unjustified sense of his own importance, yet quite as evidently a man well above the Greek average. Eleutherios Venizelos, though his family originally came from Sparta, was born in the little village of Mourniès, ten minutes away from where he was planning to end his days. Only the walls of his birthplace remain; but inside them his fellow-islanders, to whom he is still the Grand Cretan, have made a tiny garden, with a commemorative stela in the center, and on the ruined back wall is a white-marble plaque which tells us in golden letters that Venizelos first saw the light of day there in 1864.

His return to his native isle, more than four years before, had aroused great enthusiasm among the undemonstrative Cretans. Every living being in Canea knows and is proud to point out where he lives; nothing to that prophet in his own country stuff in this case. It had been sixteen years since he lived in Canea, where he wished, so he had recently said, to end his days in the island of his childhood and youth, "far from the noise and false alarms of this world. I want no more to do with the politics of Greece. So many hatreds are still accumulated against me that my reëntrance into the political arena might mean civil war. Henceforth I wish to live in calm and peace, and much as I like Athens, or Paris, I love better my Cretan native land. Nevertheless . . ."

Ah, yes, there is usually a nevertheless in such retire-

ments . . . "nevertheless, if the Greek people force my hand and oblige me again to take part in politics . . ."

Though even then half the men in the Zaimis coalition government were "Venizelists," there was an atmosphere about the end of that Canea bus line which made it no surprise to hear not long afterward that the savior of modern Greece had quitted his isle of Elba and returned to power.

As you should, though you may not, know, this Lycurgus of present-day Greece, educated as a provincial lawyer, was the leader in the revolutionary plots against the Turks who so long prevented the Cretans from politically rejoining their fellow-Greeks. He landed in Athens in 1910, united the Balkans against Turkey, and was the chief single instrument in making the Greece of to-day what it is. He quarreled with King Constantine, the Kaiser's brother-in-law, and helped to exile him and bring in the armies of the Allies. He matched wits with the keenest political minds of Europe at the Paris Peace Conference, so called, and won for Greece the rich city of Smyrna and the hinterland. But there were plots and counterplots, and in 1920 he fell from power. Then Constantine pushed his armies too far into Anatolia, and when they were overwhelmed by the Kemal-driven Turks, the Venizelos party returned to power under King George and repaired as best it could the disasters others had wrought.

Looking back upon it, I suspect that M. Venizelos, on the day I saw him playing the country gentleman revamping the ancestral estate, had already made up his mind that he must once more lay aside his Thucydides and go back to Athens to do over once more the work he had already twice done. Just why he picked the day following the earthquake disaster of Corinth to overthrow the ministry led and manned by his best political friends, or at least by men to whom he

had voluntarily turned over the government, is too complicated a story to interest deeply any one but a specialist in Balkan politics. Not merely Venizelos himself, it seems, believed that those to whom he had handed the reins of state had made a mess of the Liberal party, that the republican régime was in danger of being choked to death, that those in power were sacrificing the country to foreign moneyed interests—mainly another word for Italy.

The Grand Cretan was soon to win an almost unprecedented victory over all opposition groups, a victory which means a turning toward France as against Italy, a victory for the pro-Yugoslavia element over the pro-Mussolini combination, for Venizelos has always been a believer in the Balkans for the Balkan people. It probably means a more favorable attitude toward the free harbor for Yugoslavia at Salonika, perhaps toward that promised the Bulgarians at Kavala or Dédeagatch. And to the outside world, to the European powers with whom he has long dealt and who admire and even trust him, as far as one statesman ever trusts another, the return of Venizelos is evidence that Greece is ready at last to settle down and go to work in earnest on her innumerable weighty problems of post-war reconstruction. But since the days of Aristides the Greeks have been notoriously fickle. It remains to be seen whether they will stand behind their greatest modern leader long enough for him to make present-day Greece what it might be.

But though now, at sixty-four, the man who has seen ten revolutions and taken part in eight has entered upon his third period of power, there is little doubt that he would prefer to go back to Crete, with its roses and its asphodels, its wild marguerites and its rhododendrons, its olive orchards and the buried palaces of the kings of Knossos, to his little crowded den and the leisurely study of Thucydides. Yet if republican

Greece is to be done with puppet monarchs and opera-bouffe dictators and constant political turmoil, it must have a stabilizer, and his name is Venizelos. So Thucydides, who has already waited twenty-four centuries, must wait a little longer.

Pangalos I did not see, though he also was living in Crete. It would have taken an hour or two by auto-bus along precipice-bordering roads to reach his residence, perhaps fully as long to get into it, and possibly even longer to get out again; for so at least it has proved to Mr. Pangalos himself. For his residence is the famous old Izzedine prison, inside an enormous fortress built on the flank of a mountain at the southern end of the Bay of Sude. There he lives in the apartment of the prison director, with a balcony as his share of the outside world, permission to walk twice a day in the big court-garden for exercise, the right to receive books and newspapers. Those privileges may long remain the only freedom of action of a man who for a year ruled Greece with a heavy hand. Most Greeks admit that Pangalos was merely a self-seeker urged on by an ambitious wife; and most of them agree that Venizelos, though he may have made mistakes, is a sincere and honest patriot, of whom there are not too many in the political circles of modern Greece.

The steamer plodded on eastward along the almost perpendicular coast. Rethymno, where we anchored far out, in the hot haze of midday, also has its ancient fortress and several minarets—pointed, unusually high and slender minarets, like sharpened pencils—as against one church tower. A small town, inclosed by an old sea-wall, with a lighthouse at one end, a few greenish fields spreading upward beyond it a little way up the skirts of repulsive mountains rising to a lofty point adorned with the inevitable white chapel, due to be visited on August 15. We loaded bags of caoba and plodded on along the coast.



What the well-dressed Cretan boy will wear



Eleutherios Venizelos, once again premier and long the outstanding statesman of Greece



The male costume of Crete also includes a heavy jacket



A Cretan family

A stony, mountainous, mostly infertile island, soaring into mountains beautiful at a distance, especially in the purple lights of morning and evening, towns and villages, mainly white, tucked away in the lower laps of them. One mountain piles up in a series of domes which you might fancy the inspiration for the great Constantinople mosques. Here and there stretches of olive-green along the lower foot-hills, always quickly ending in barren heights not worth terracing. I saw no terraces in Crete, only ash-heaps, sometimes faintly sprinkled, barely prickled, with green, for long distances, without a sign of man or any other animal.

Candia, which the Greeks now call Herakleion, also has a tiny stone-walled, horseshoe-shaped harbor calked with a lighthouse and a fortress at the respective ends, and big enough for only the tiniest steamers and sailing vessels. The town was less interesting than Canea. Here there was a rage for "improvements," wide but still unpaved streets, garages in corners of the ancient city wall. The stubs of minarets rose above the rest. On the main street the Greeks had cut down trees from which the Turks were given to hanging them; they were digging up the principal mosque and building something else in its place. The population of Crete used to be fifty-fifty; to-day there is not a Turk on the island.

The Hotel Minos, owned by an ex-American and announcing itself, far out beyond the harbor, in Broadway electric letters two feet high, is perhaps the best hotel on the Ægean islands, and ranks high among the hostelryes of Greece. The proprietor is a modernist; but of what use are bathrooms when there is no running water, because there is no water to run? The youth who pumps what there is may resemble the Minotaur, but even Theseus could not help him, though he might, with Ariadne's patronage, be useful in guiding one through the labyrinth of Candia's outer streets.

Herakleion has many automobiles but also some bonetwisting closed carriages; there is a little railway, too, but it carries only freight. Her flies bite like hornets—too hot for them in Greece proper? Or perhaps, since Crete is half-way to Egypt, the Egyptian flies summer there. At sunset the whole town turns out and strolls along the beginning of the main road to the interior, past the park in which hundreds sit at café tables and outdoor movies and where you have merely to consume rather than pay admission. But you must come by nine to be sure of a seat, and wait until nearly eleven before the foolish shadow dramas begin.

Café and restaurant tables under white awnings about the old Venetian four-dog stone fountain in the center of town; another farther down the main street toward the harbor. I shall never be surprised to read under a Herakleion date-line that a waiter has been killed in line of duty by an automobile. For the tables cover both sidewalks, not only before the restaurant itself but before the bank building opposite, and waiters carrying food and drink dash back and forth through the traffic descending the street to the little harbor, shouting "Mia peponia!" (which, as I have said before, means a slice of cantaloup) and that other national war-cry of Greece, "Ma'ista!" meaning "At once!" in the dictionary and "Whenever I get around to it" in practice. Snails were sold in pailfuls now, because during the fifteen fast days of "Little Easter" the pious eat no meat, and snails have no blood.

Some of the million and a half refugee Greeks from Asia Minor and elsewhere have built shack shops in Herakleion, and their makeshift homes are stuck like hornets' nests against the old city ramparts and other protective structures which spare them the building of a back wall. Moreover, there is a whole new town in the usual bone-dry suburb

reached by rattling motor-bus. Out there a dozen cloth-sail windmills, the largest that of a grist-mill with an interesting scene in the stone-tower interior, to which wheat is brought on the backs of donkeys and other burden-bearers, the others drawing water, were toiling away in a little depression. The bare streets of the government-built refugee suburb are identical with those elsewhere. Women haul up water by hand in the middle of one of them, standing on the stone or mud-brick uncovered well-curb several feet high. Though there are far too many people in Crete for the island to support, the raising of children seems to be the main industry even among the refugees. Between the new settlement and the main town are the finest beaches imaginable, water unsurpassed, where bathing-suits are unnecessary.

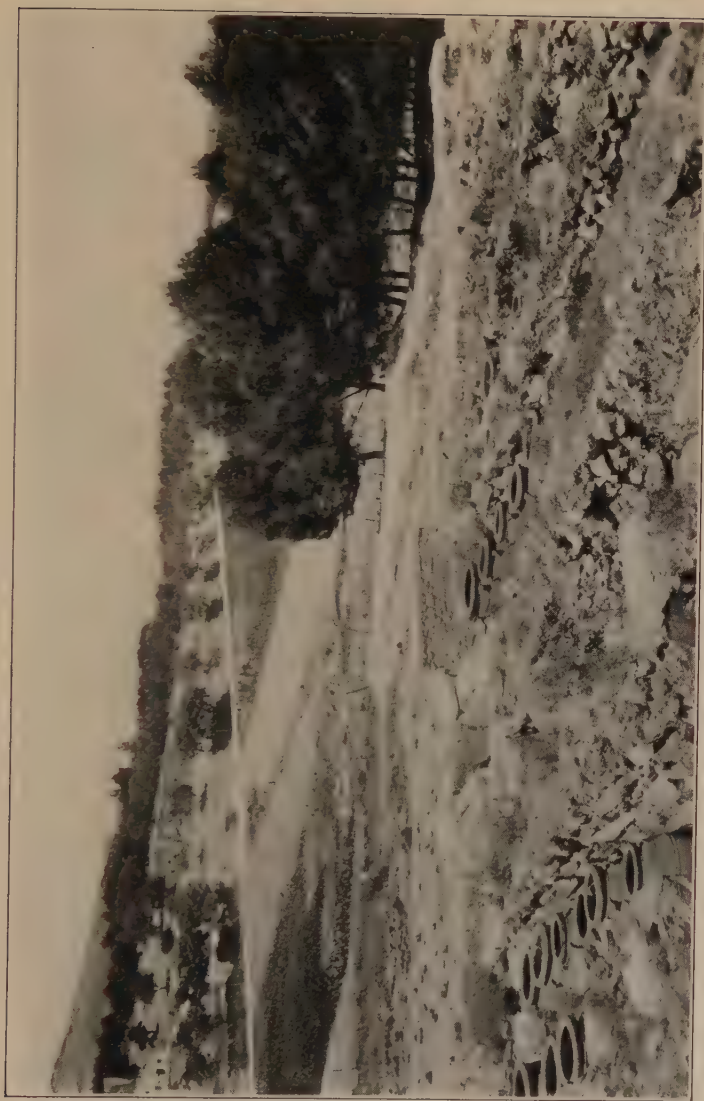
The costumes of Crete are a mixture of the old and the modern, the old-fashioned male garb one of the most picturesque ones left in the Near East. The principal cloth is the most delicately blue navy-blue I have ever seen on a man, just a little too blue for even the most showy of us to wear. It is expensive, finely woven of pure wool, many times too thick for my summer taste, and is made—in England. Many are the little open-den tailor shops that turn this cloth into the garb still worn by most countrymen, especially of the older generation, even by boys. The embroidered jacket . . . Oh, come now, you surely can't expect me to labor over another costume description this late in the day—see the photographs. It would require an expert-tailor program-writer or a taxidermist or something of the sort to describe adequately the Cretan male costume.

The voluminous trousers serve as a carry-all. Like the kangaroo with its marsupial pouch, the men seem not at all to mind a load like a cow's heavy udder swinging between their legs. Bread, cheese, olives, anything needed along the

way go into and wobble about in the capacious slack of the trousers. The wasp-like waists of the men of Crete have been famous for many centuries, as we shall soon see, and the alzarine or lilac-purple silk sash about the waist costs a lot of money, as money goes in Crete. So do the high boots which make the Cretan bootblack's life miserable. Most of these are black, well-made riding boots, though not many men ride, boots worthy our proudest army officers. The real swanks wear white sheepskin boots, not only because those are more showy but because, since they are more expensive and less durable and easily soiled, to have them whole and clean is an evidence of wealth. A couple of inches of bare, not always washed, sunburned-as-the-face knees between the high boots and the skirt-trousers seems to be *de rigueur* among those who pose as he-men. Women also wear the heavy boots, and have their own ideas in dress, but they by no means achieve the circus-parade aspect of the men.

Auto-buses run from Herakleion to various parts of the island. The front seat is tolerable, if you can capture it; but two travelers besides the driver generally crowd into it. The rest of the vehicle is commonly a truck in which passengers sit on the bare floor, or at best on narrow little loose-board seats that have a way of frequently breaking down. But discomfort means nothing to this people.

Personally I preferred to walk. I hate to come home from a trip abroad with my legs already rested; if only one could have the real hardships at the last moment and then fly home . . . at least it would be a little longer before the call of the open road became imperative again. My tramping shoes had succumbed to Parnassus; my walking clothes and country hat had passed into oblivion. But there is no curing a bad habit. Like the naughty little boy who no sooner gets all dressed up than he goes out and plays in the mud,



Archæologically speaking, Crete is especially noted for the pre-Grecian ruins of Knossos



This is by no means the largest or most artistic of the great jars uncovered at Knossos



The brilliant colors of these restorations of the wall paintings of ancient Knossos are proved authentic by remnants in the museum of Herakleion

I found myself taking a dusty, sweaty tramp of twenty hot and stony miles, which should at least help to keep me contented during the long sea voyage ahead.

An hour's walk out the evening-promenade road brought me to Knossos. By day the blazing white, soft, glaring limestone of which most of Crete is made powders the grapes and everything else along the edge of the well-traveled highway, and soon gives the pedestrian the appearance of having climbed out of a flour-barrel. Men, sometimes an immodest woman, jogged by, sitting sidewise on their donkeys, swinging their heavy boots. Two-wheeled one-mule carts rumbled past, each with eighteen pigskins bursting full of new red wine, the drivers asleep. Smaller carts drawn by donkeys reminded one of Ireland.

All are stopped, searched, taxed at the octroi-station on the edge of Herakleion. For to-day, far from exacting from Athens seven brave youths and as many fair maidens yearly as fodder for her bull-headed monster, Crete sends tribute to Athens. Cart-loads, wagon-loads, truck-loads of the splendid big grapes of Crete were just then being shipped from the principal port of Greece's long island. They came down to the wharves in new baskets with heaped-up woven tops, on all manner of Cretan conveyances, so that the rattle of cart-wheels loose on their axles sounded along the descending main street all night long.

I hardly need remind you that Crete was one of the chief seats of the Mycenæan civilization which flourished before the rise of the Hellenes, reaching its height about fifteen centuries before Christ. Hence for the archæologist the island is notable mainly for the ruins of ancient Knossos, the traditional capital of Crete, with its remnants of an advanced civilization older than that of Greece. Knossos was entirely modern in its insistence upon hygiene and comfort, on proper

drainage, even on daily baths. The palace of its king was famous for its winding stairways, its immense banqueting hall, for a cellar where grain and wine and olive-oil were stored, so vast that it gave rise to the labyrinth story. To this day it is not clear just what caused the downfall of Knossos. No doubt the savages from the banks of the Danube, who later became the ancient Greeks, having learned many things from the men living behind the high walls of Mycenæ, Tiryns, Knossos, destroyed this highest form of Ægean civilization as having outlived its usefulness.

The Knossos ruins lie close to the main road. There are long rows of earthenware jars in stone-faced trenches, many of them big enough to hold a short man standing upright. Others are scattered about the ruins, the heavier with a dozen or a score of handles. Supplies kept in them? If so the jam had long since been eaten when the archæologists found them, or the corpses had disintegrated, no contents left; so the scientists can only guess what purpose they served. They carried the mind back to similar huge jars, hewn out of solid granite, on the plains of Xieng Khuang in French Indo-China. Those uncovered at Knossos are of earthenware, yet in a way an even more remarkable feat in the making, so huge are they and so intricate with handles and decorations; and in many cases one marvels no less at the way they have been expertly patched up.

The English archæologist responsible for the unearthing of Knossos has tried to restore, not without success, enough of its ancient buildings and their decorations to make them tangible to the layman of feeble imagination. The brilliant colors of the restored wall paintings are the most impressive part of this work, to the popular taste; and one would be inclined to credit that Englishman with a gift for exaggeration equal to his self-confidence, were there not in the Candia

museum remnants enough of the originals to prove the incredible as to colors, and as to the men's waists. The slender waists of the men in those shriekingly bright restorations of the wall-paintings of ancient Knossos are still, after so many centuries, one of the specialties and chief prides of the male Cretan. They do not seem to use corsets; evidently they are just naturally built that way.

I recommend to the seeker in quest of the picturesque the old aqueduct which strides in huge stone arches across the ravine and the old stone road just beyond the ruins of Knossos. The modern road, for carts and wagons and panting automobiles, sneaks down through the valley and out again by a long detour, a roundabout shirking of the climb, like most modern roads. The ancient stone one stalks sturdily down through the little river and straight up over the hill beyond, with the directness and scorn for easy going of ancient or primitive peoples.

That old road seems to lead on over the horizon to romance. But it does not, as usual; for I plodded on in the hot, dry sunshine clear over the crest, to a commonplace village, with soldiers and an outdoor lunch-room, then on and on again, without finding any hint of romance. Yet something dragged me still farther, hour after hour, for all the heat and dust and, toward the end, feet wearying from the incessant impact with the stony road; on by a strange trail over a stony ridge to Arkhanes, with its vast fields of flat-topped grape arbors, heavy with ripening fruit, beyond which the Minotaur we call time forbade me to stray. No one in the fields, any more than in the expensively restored ruins of Knossos, during the hot hours of the day; but men and girls were all picking ripening tobacco in the shadows of the hills at sunset.



BULGARIA

ADRIANOPLE

DEBAGATE

BRANA

SALONIKA

THASOS

MITATHOS

SMYTHRAKI

GALLI POLI

IMBROS

LEMNOS

DARDANELLES

SKYROS

CEIOS

CORFU

EPHROS

THESSALY

LEUKAS

ACARNANIA and AETOLIA

PHYLLOTTIS

PHOCIS

EDUSSIA

THEBES

ATTICA

BOEOTIA

CEPHALONIA

ZANTE

ACHAIA and ELIS

ARGOS

ARCADIA

MESSENIA

LAONIA

SPARTA

CYTHERA

ANDROS

TINOS

SEIOS

PARANAPOLIS

NAZOS

LABLOS

SANTORIN

SAMOS

NIKARIA

SEA of CRETE

CRETE

SEA of MEDITERRANEAN



The
PRINCE of VAGABONDS
in
THE LAND OF
ULYSSES



